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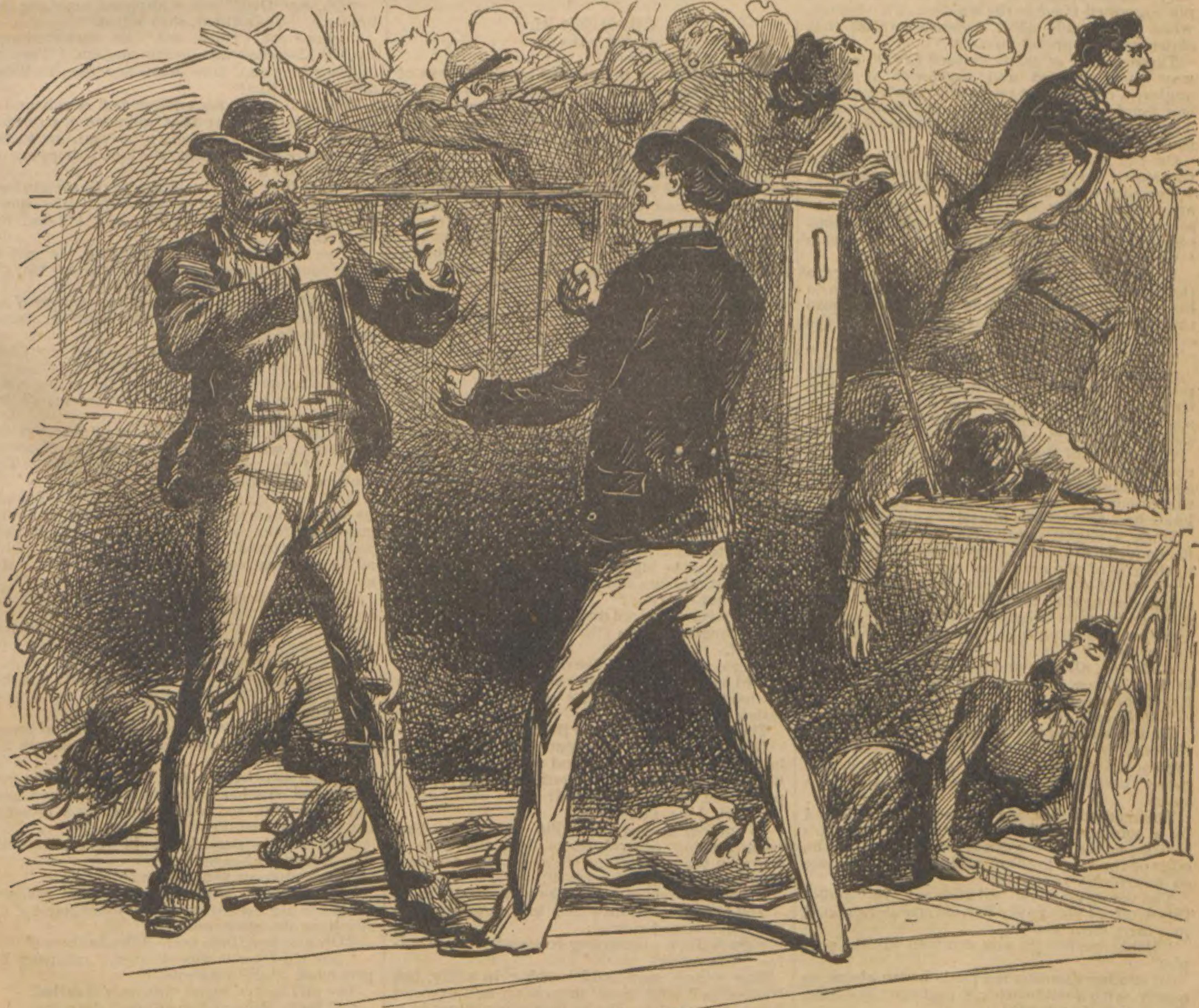
No. 262

FIGHTING TOM, The Terror of the Toughs.

A STORY OF A VERY DECEIVING YOUNG MAN.

BY COL. THOMAS HOYER MONSTERY,
CHAMPION-AT-ARMS OF THE TWO AMERICAS.

AUTHOR OF "IRON WRIST, THE SWORDMASTER," "THE DEMON DUELIST," "THE CZAR SPY," "MOURAD, THE MAMELUKE," ETC., ETC.



LAYING THE INSENSIBLE GIRL DOWN THE DUDE STEPPED OUT TO FACE THE BIG RUFFIAN, EXCLAIMING: "NOW, MY FRIEND, TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!"

Fighting Tom;

OR,

The Terror of the Toughs.

A Story of a Very Deceiving Young Man.

BY COLONEL THOS. H. MONSTERY,
Champion-at-arms of the Two Americas,
 AUTHOR OF "IRON WRIST," "CHAMPION SAM,"
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CHAPTER I.

THE DECEIVING DUDE.

It was Decoration Day in New York city, and Broadway was black with the crowds of sight-seers.

The streets re-echoed to the music of the bands, as regiment after regiment passed the reviewing-stand and took its way home to the armory.

The procession broke up after reaching Canal street and the little posts of the Grand Army dispersed to the various ferries and railroad stations, to visit the outlying cemeteries. A few marched to the Brooklyn Bridge which had just been opened after tedious years of waiting. When they arrived there, they found the whole of the narrow footway blocked with people, and, so great was the pressure from either end of the bridge that the crowd had come to a stand-still, and none could advance either way.

A few moments later came a great surging roll of the crowd, and a hoarse murmur began about the middle of the long road, which ran back through the multitude to the New York shore, and finally framed itself into the cry:

"Back! back! People are being killed!"

It seemed so strange on such a holiday, when everything around seemed to be so peaceful and joyous, when every one had a bunch of flowers or a wreath, and no one thought of anything but pleasure, to hear that cry:

"People are being killed!"

And indeed they were being killed in a manner at once so dreadful and inevitable that the only wonder seemed to be that the trouble had not suggested itself to the builders of the bridge, when they made of it a death-trap, at that staircase of mournful memory.

Three flights of steps at each tower; a foot-way that widened and narrowed at sharp angles; a crowd that packed it closely; a reckless band of street rowdies; the elements of death were all there, and a moment precipitated the disaster.

On the New York footway, at the bottom of the stairs, stood a tall and slender young man, whose slim waist and broad shoulders gave him an elegant aspect that made the ordinary observer think him effeminate, though a connoisseur in athletics would have pronounced him a "very deceiving young man."

He was dressed with that neatness and care that marked him as one who paid attention to his personal appearance, and elicited from more than one envious and slovenly youth in the crowd the audible sneer:

"Hey, boys! Look at the long-legged dude!"

As far as dress went, the young man might possibly have been classed as a "dude," while the gentle, good-natured expression of his handsome, blonde face aided the idea among the bystanders of his effeminacy.

One or two of the roughs in the crowd, which contained numerous pickpockets, jostled up against him as if by accident, when they made the discovery that the "long-legged dude" knew how to "handle himself" amazingly well.

With a slight, apparently careless sway of his body, he sent out a pair of sharp elbows into the ribs of the malicious ones, drove all the wind out of one man's body, and sent another staggering against the railing; the same placid smile on his face as before, while he said softly:

"Please don't push so. It's no use. We can't get forward."

And then, all of a sudden, they heard a cry in the distance, in the rear of the crowd at the top of the steps:

"Make way for the Old Gang! Hi! hi!"

Up to that moment the crowd had been stationary, the people at the top of the steps pushing back, the steps bare of people, the crowd below hesitating to advance into the open space.

The moment that cry arose it was followed by a confusion of shouts, oaths, and women's shrieks, as the throng above was pushed to the edge of the fatal flight of stairs, soon to become so mournfully notorious.

The young man who had been called a "dude" threw off all his apathy in a minute and shouted in a high, clear voice:

"Back! back! Do you want to kill the people?"

In another moment the panic began above, as a lady, with a wild shriek, tried to run down the steps, slipped and fell!

Then came an avalanche of people, pushed over, trying to keep up but thrown down the steps headlong, and the crowd below recoiled in horror.

All but the dude.

Before the first rush came he had darted forward, seized the first lady that had fallen, picked her up like a feather, and darted back as the people were pushed over.

After that sudden avalanche, Hercules could have done no more.

He had saved one life, the life of a woman, and she hung in his arms, white and senseless, while the dead and dying were piled up round them, and the young man, in spite of his power and dexterity, was almost overwhelmed.

Then a man in uniform leaped upon the trestle-work of the car-tracks that bounded the roadway, and began to shout the warning which spread so rapidly:

"Back, back! they're killing people!"

The cry spread quickly on the New York side, and people began to rush back to the gates, which were thrown wide open to give them egress.

On the Brooklyn side the crowd still remained immovable, till the uniformed man, who was a bridge policeman, managed to make himself heard and to turn them back.

When the retrograde movement began the policeman saw a line of about a dozen men, one behind another, with their hands resting on each other's shoulders, headed by a man of great height and bulk, who had a determined, brutal-looking face.

All were slowly pushing through the crowd toward the stairs, with a measured tramp, and the cry, in unison:

"Hi! hi! hi! hi! Tchoo! tchoo! tchoo!"

"Keep back, you brutes!" he shouted. "You're killing people."

The big man laughed contemptuously and shouted back:

"Go to grass! This is the Old Gang, and we're going through. Hi! hi! tchoo! tchoo!"

And on they went, parting the fast diminishing crowd, till they came to what was now an empty platform, and saw below them the crushed and writhing bodies of the dead and dying.

When they saw what had been done, the hands dropped, the men started back with exclamations of horror, and began to run back with the crowd to Brooklyn.

CHAPTER II.
BUCK JARVIS.

ALL but the leader.

He looked down, unappalled by the groans of the dying, and saw in the midst, at the foot of the steps a confused mass of people some trying to crawl out, with the single erect figure of the young man, carrying in his arms the senseless woman above the press.

A silence—the silence of awe—had succeeded the shrieks and cries of a few moments before, and the big man saw in the distance an ambulance dashing up, and policemen with stretchers.

He came to the edge of the staircase of death, and looked as if he were about to leap down, when the horrified bridge policeman yelled:

"My God! Go back! What are you going to do?"

The big man shook his huge shoulders and looked up with a sneer, answering:

"What am I goin' to do? I'm a-goin' to New York—that's what I'm a-goin' to do. Buck Jarvis ain't beat so easy."

So saying, he deliberately gathered his body into a ball, and rolled over and over the heap of crushed humanity to the open footway below.

And just as he got up on his feet, the young man below, who had been called a "dude," managed to extricate himself from the mass of bodies, with the woman still in his arms, and called out fiercely:

"You brute! you coward! You ought to be flung into the river."

Instantly the big man turned with a scowl.

"What'n blazes ails you? Who are ye talkin' to? What d'ye say?"

And with the word made a blow for the young man, burdened as he still was with the insensible girl.

There was a cry of horror from such of the crowd as remained to play spectators, turned a moment later, into a cry of admiration and satisfaction.

The blow never reached its mark.

It was aimed at the young man's head, and he avoided it so neatly, and with so little trouble, by a sidewise movement, that the bridge policeman on the truss cried:

"Well done, dude!"

In another moment the slim young man had backed away several paces, laid the woman down by the railing, and stepped out to face the giant, with the quiet remark:

"Now, my friend, take care of yourself."

The big man instantly fell into an attitude of self-defense, and roared:

"Buck Jarvis is the boy to sweeten your coffee. Come on!"

The young man said nothing in reply, but "saile in" with such surprising activity and force, that before Buck Jarvis could get in a blow, his face was a mass of cuts and bruises; he fell back, blinded and confused; and then, by means of a sudden push and trip, executed so quickly that the bystanders could not find out

how it was done, the bully was sent on his back with a thud that knocked the senses out of him, when the young man dragged him to the edge of the trestle-work and would have thrown him down, had not the police come running up, shouting:

"Stop that! What are you doing?"

"He's doing just right," yelled the bridge policeman. "I seen it all, and he's a-doin' just right. You leave him alone."

So saying the man came running along the trestle-work to his assistance, but the young man, whose face was white as a sheet and whose eyes were gleaming like those of a wild beast, seemed to recover his senses at the coming of the police and said:

"I beg your pardon. I forgot myself. Help these poor creatures, if you're men."

And with that he stepped over to the lady he had saved, picked her up again and began to march back in the crowd, every one cheering him, while the policemen began to try and extricate the living people from the mangled corpses that had come so suddenly into the light of Decoration Day.

The New York crowd parted before the young man and he had nearly reached the ambulance, when he felt the woman in his arms move, and she began to struggle.

Instantly he stopped; set her down, and supported her, asking:

"Are you hurt much?"

For the first time he looked at her face, and saw that she was young and pretty, with dark eyes, which looked up at him in a dazed, frightened way as she said:

"What is it? Who are you? Where is my mother?"

Then the young man's face fell as he answered rather falteringly:

"There has been an accident. Are you hurt? Where do you live?"

People were round them, staring curiously and the girl seemed bewildered.

"I don't understand. Where is my mother?" was all she said.

"Was your mother with you in the crush?" he asked in a trembling tone.

The girl started and looked wildly round her, as the reality began to crowd on her.

"Oh, my God!" she whispered, catching her breath. "She's killed, she's killed."

"I hope not, I think not," he answered gently. "Keep up your heart, madam, I'll try to find her for you. How was she dressed? What did she look like?"

The girl made no answer but a sob and a shudder, for, just at that moment a stretcher passed by, with the body of a man on it, the face covered with a coat, the blood dripping as the stretcher moved.

"Don't look at it," said the young man to her. "It will only unnerve you. Tell me quick what your mother looks like, and I'll find her for you."

"She was dressed in black," said the girl in a low tone. "Her hair is quite white. Oh, sir, for God's sake find her for me."

"I will," he answered, and then a New York policeman came hurrying up, club in hand, crying as he came:

"Here, keep back there, all of yer! Clear this roadway quick! Move on!"

"One moment, officer!" cried the young man. "Take care of this lady for a moment, while I find her mother."

"Hain't no time to find no one," retorted the policeman, waving his club. "Get back out of here. Move on. Take yer lady home. This ain't no fittin' place fur her. Git!"

And so saying, with a couple of his friends, he shoved back the crowd to the gate, quite regardless of expostulations, just as a big man with a battered, bloody face, came lurching along the roadway from the scene of the disaster.

Hi the policeman appeared to recognize, for he cried out:

"Hello, Buck! What! were you into it, too? Poor feller! Toddle along to the hospital. By gosh, this here's awful!"

"Tain't nothin'," returned Buck with a rather rueful grin. "I ain't hurt as bad as some of 'em, Hank."

The young man who had saved the girl recognized the voice and saw his late foe slouch by, avoiding his eye.

To his surprise, he felt the girl on his arm start, and saw her stare at the big man as if she knew him, too, while she shrunk closer to her young protector.

Buck Jarvis passed on, however, and the young man whispered:

"Do you know that fellow?"

She shuddered violently and seemed ready to drop, for her nerves were all unstrung by the shock, as she answered:

"Oh yes, my God, yes! Was he there?"

"Not till after it was all over," returned her protector. "He's a brute!"

The girl looked up at him, as if startled.

"What? Do you know him?" she asked.

"Never saw him before," returned the young man, and they were forced along in the crowd to the gates, unable to stop, and the girl began to wring her hands and say brokenly:

"Oh my God, what shall I do? How shall I find my mother? It seems so hard. Won't they let us in again?"

The young man hesitated a moment, and then said gravely:

"Madam, you don't know me, of course, but if you will trust me, I will find your mother for you, dead or alive. My name is Harvey. Here is my card. Let me send you home in a carriage, and give me your address. I will bring you word within an hour."

She looked up at him through swimming eyes.

"Sir," she said, "you are a gentleman. I live at No. — West — street, and my name is Nina Somers. I will trust you."

Harvey beckoned to a hack-driver, put the girl inside, gave the driver directions, and then returned to the bridge.

He did not see Buck Jarvis watching them both.

CHAPTER III.

NINA'S DISAPPEARANCE.

WHEN Harvey got back to the bridge, he was confronted by closed gates and a policeman at a single wicket, who told him that no more people would be allowed on the bridge till the bodies had been removed.

The handsome youth edged closer to the man and whispered something in his ear, while passing something else into his hand, and the knight of the club immediately drew back, saying audibly for the benefit of the envious crowd behind:

"Oh, well, if you've got relatives in the crush, go ahead. They're bringing them out now."

The young man saw that the lately crowded bridge was almost deserted, save for a train of blue-coated firemen and policemen coming toward the New York side with a ghastly array of stretchers, carrying the dying and the dead.

Harvey went eagerly to meet them, saying as he passed each body:

"I'm looking for a lady in black, with white hair. She was in the crush."

"Reckon she's one of the dead, then," said the fireman at the head of the mournful procession. "I saw one body of an old lady."

Harvey passed quickly to the rear and spied a black skirt hanging over the edge of the long stretcher, the last in the file.

Eagerly he hastened to it and found that it was the dead body of an old lady with white hair.

She seemed asleep, but with a troubled, painful expression on her features; her dress had been torn to pieces, and she lay on the stretcher covered over with a tarpaulin, stone-dead.

Harvey spoke to her bearers.

"Did you find anything on the body to identify her?" he asked.

"Haven't looked," said one of the men. "They'll search 'em at the dead-house, I reckon. Do you know the old lady?"

"I'm not sure. What killed her?"

The man made a grimace of aversion.

"Poor woman! She was all smashed up and lay at the bottom of 'em all. Lucky for her, she must have smothered quick. Bah! It's horrible! Look there. There's suthin' sticking out of the bosom of her dress."

Harvey saw that there was, and further made out that it was a card-case or pocket-book, which he examined as he followed the litter.

"Yes," he said, after a look, "I thought so. It's poor Mrs. Somers. See here. I know where that lady lived when she was alive, poor soul, and I'll take charge of the body, if you like."

"Can't be done, sir," replied the man, but not uncivilly. "The coroner's got to see them all. He'll set right over in the Hall, I reckon. If there's any relatives to identify the body you'd better go bring them, sir."

"You're right," returned Harvey. "I'll do it, though I confess I don't covet the task."

Then he started for the exit from the bridge, where he soon found a hack and told the man to drive to No. — West — street.

Away rattled the coach up-town, and after a long drive and many detours to avoid fragments of the procession, Harvey's vehicle stopped at the door of a small frame house near the North river, one of those relics of the Manhattan of forty years ago that are to be found off the main tracks of business, where rents are low and the neighborhood pervaded by shanties, rocks and goats.

It was a very small house for the city, not containing more than six rooms, and Harvey went to the door, which was opened by a stout, honest-looking woman, who began at once before he could speak:

"The ladies are not at home, sur. They've garn to the big bridge, sur. Sorra wan of them's at home but meself and the ould cat, sur."

"Who is it lives here, then?" asked Harvey.

"Sure it's Mrs. Somers, sir."

"And hasn't Miss Nina come back in a hack?"

The woman stared.

"And how would she come back when I tell ye she's gone to the big bridge?"

Harvey hesitated a moment. He had never

seen Nina Somers in his life before, but he had already taken a strange interest in her.

"Look here, Norah," he began.

"Me name's not Norah, av ye plaze, young man, and I'll be thankin' ye to kape yer Norahs to yerself. I tell ye the ladies is not in," was the answer, in tones of indignation, as the woman tried to slam the door on him, but found herself arrested by an invisible obstacle, which was nothing more or less than the foot of the young man, which he had placed in the opening while he was talking, in the expectation of some such outburst.

"Well, I don't care what your name is," he said rather sharply. "But you don't know what has happened. There has been a great accident at the bridge, and Mrs. Somers is dead. Do you understand?"

The woman uttered a loud shriek and began to wring her hands and howl in the spontaneous Celtic fashion:

"Oh, Mrs. Somers! Mrs. Somers! Oh, the poor missis is dead! Ochone! ochone! Oh, Miss Nina, Miss Nina, where are ye, darlin'?"

"That's just what I want to find out," said Harvey, impatiently. "I put her in a hack half an hour ago to come up here, while I went back. Hasn't she come yet? What's your name, my good woman?"

"Kate O'Donnell, sur, and indade Miss Nina's not come home, sur. Sorra speck of her have I seen this blessed day since she left wid the ould lady that's in heaven now," and Kate began to howl again, while Harvey, hardly knowing what to do, stood on the steps hesitating.

"What is it to me?" he thought. "I never saw the girl before, and I'm not likely to do it again. I can't help her. Her mother's dead. Perhaps she has ordered the hackman to turn round and go back to the bridge. I've done all I can do. I may as well go home."

Nevertheless, something impelled him to stay and say to old Kate:

"Look here, Kate, do you know a man who calls himself Buck Jarvis?"

Kate's face assumed a look of terror instantly as she ejaculated:

"Oh, Holy Fathers! Do I know the wicked devil? Sure I do, bad luck to him!"

Harvey was puzzled at the avowal.

To him the man was clearly a low ruffian, well known to the police, yet he seemed to be equally well known to this quiet family.

"Who is he?" asked Harvey. "I mean, what is he to this family? Do they know him?"

Kate had stopped howling in her fears for this mysterious Buck Jarvis, as she said:

"Oh, mother of Moses, sur, don't talk about that devil. Sure, if he set eyes on Miss Nina away from her mother he'd have her in a prison or locked up in a back room in a minute, so he wad."

Harvey looked amazed.

"But why? why?"

Kate backed into the house, whispering:

"Arrah, don't ask me now, sur. 'Tis no business of yours, sur."

Harvey followed her in to say:

"It's this much business, Kate. I'm afraid he must have got hold of her."

Kate turned deadly pale.

"Oh, Holy Mother!" was all she could falter. Harvey came closer, saying impressively:

"Now speak, Kate, and tell me the truth. Has that man any hold on the girl, and if so, what is it? I'm a lawyer, and I want to know so that I can serve her."

Kate shook her head slowly.

"It's no use, sur. He's her father."

Harvey started violently.

"That big brute her father? Impossible!"

"Indade it's true then, sur, so the missus said."

"But his name's different?"

"I don't know about that, sur, but sure I h'ard say that—"

The rumble of wheels was heard on the cobble-stones at the end of the street, and Harvey saw a hack coming toward the house.

In the hope that Nina Somers might possibly be in it, he hurried down the steps and waited.

The hack came straight to the house; pulled up; and Buck Jarvis got out.

As he saw Harvey he started slightly, but then put on a bold face and passed him, going up the steps.

Harvey looked into the hack and saw with dismay that it was empty.

CHAPTER IV.

KATE'S PERPLEXITIES.

THE young lawyer gave one glance into the coach and then looked up at the driver.

It was not the man to whom he had given Nina in charge.

For a moment he hesitated, then suddenly took a resolution and walked up the steps to where Buck Jarvis now stood on the landing, with an ugly sneer on his brutal and swollen face, looking down at him.

The big man backed a step into the doorway and put his hand to his hip, saying:

"Now, then, what's the matter with you?"

"What have you done with Nina Somers?" asked Harvey quietly.

Buck Jarvis curled his lip into a sneer, made doubly ugly by a cut in the middle.

"What's that to you?" he said. "This here's my house, and you ain't got no call to say nor do nothin' to me. You jest quit."

Harvey saw that it was no use to argue with the brute, and felt, moreover, that he was right in repudiating interference if he were indeed Nina's father, but he said:

"That young lady appealed to me to go back into the scene of the disaster and find her mother. I have done so, and I wish to tell her about it."

Buck Jarvis grinned maliciously.

"Go ahead and tell her, then. I ain't doin' nothin' to hender ye."

"Do you know where she is?"

"That's my biz, not yours."

Harvey felt his temper rising, and he said, as he shook his finger at Buck:

"Very well. You may think you can fool me, my friend, but I warn you that, if harm comes to that girl through you, I'll hunt you down, wherever you may be, and punish you."

Buck Jarvis scowled savagely.

"You go to grass, fur a pale-faced dude. I ain't skeered of you. Ye set on me foul ons't, but I'm a-goin' fixed for you. Git off this stoop. D'y'e hear?"

His position was one of such advantage that he could not resist the temptation, and tried to give Harvey a shove down the steps.

But the young man, in all his anger, was as cool and wary as only practice can make a man, and in a moment he had stooped out of the way, so that Jarvis missed his aim and went down the steps himself, clutching at the balusters, and saving himself from a fall with difficulty.

When he faced round again, his young antagonist was quietly descending the steps, while old Kate still stood at the door, paralyzed with fear.

"You see what you get for trying to shove," observed Harvey, calmly. "You're too old to face me, my friend; so don't try it. Better keep your hand off that pistol too, or I may have you locked up for carrying it."

Somehow or other Buck Jarvis's hand left his hip pocket, though he cast a glance of bitter malignity at Harvey, as the young man went down to his vehicle and was driven away.

"Ay, there ye go," he muttered, "and ye think ye've done a great sight, don't ye? But I'll double-bank ye, yet, and don't you forget it, Mister Dude."

Then he went up the steps and addressed Kate, who stood trembling at the door.

"Here, Irish, where's Nina's duds and fixin's?"

"Sur?" asked Kate, palpitating.

"Where's Nina's duds and fixin's?" roared Buck, savagely. "Hain't ye got no ears, ye dodrotted Mick lummix? Hain't I brought a kerridge fur 'em, as if she was a princess? Go and get 'em quick. All she's got. Pack 'em up anyhow, sq. ye do't quick."

"And where's Miss Nina and the missis?" asked Kate, mustering up her courage.

"What's blazes is that to you?" retorted Buck, in a scornful tone. "She's my darter, to do as I like with. The missis is dead, if ye want to know. Now go and get the duds."

"And who'll be afther payin' me my wages?" asked Kate, more boldly.

"Wages be darned. I didn't hire ye," answered Buck, with a sneer. "Take what ye kin git in the house, and sell it. We ain't comin' here no more. I ain't mean, I ain't."

Kate was so much amazed at his reply that she could only ejaculate:

"Holy Fathers, sur, d've want me to stale my wages? Where's Miss Nina? I'll not give a thing of hers away till I see her ownself, so I won't."

And the faithful creature, made bold by her affections, ran back into the house before Buck Jarvis could realize what she was doing, and slammed the door in his face, when he heard her shoot the bolts and then run up-stairs.

Furious at his repulse, he began to pull the bell and hammered at the door, till he was suddenly aroused by a dash of cold water down his back, and heard Kate screaming at the top of her voice, out of the window above:

"Help! Murder! Murder! Thaves! Murder!"

Then he heard windows going up, and saw heads coming out to stare, while he stumped down the steps, apprehensive of a second deluge, shaking his fist and growling:

"I'll be even with ye, ye Irish fool! I'll come with the coos next time."

"Ah, go long wid ye!" shrieked Kate, made bolder still by the signs of his flight. "Ye murderin' haythen, ye don't set foot in the house till I see the missis or Miss Nina."

"We'll see about that!" he shouted back in a tone of concentrated fury. "I'll show ye."

Then he got into the hack and drove off, while Kate went round the house and fastened up everything tight before she went back to the front door and entered into conversation with the curious neighbors, who wanted to know what was the matter and received in answer the least possible information from Kate, who, now that the excitement was over, began to

Fighting Tom.

feel frightened and so bewildered she did not know what to do. Only that morning, early, her mistress and Miss Nina had gone out for a day's trip; and here came the news to Kate, like a clap of thunder, that Mrs. Somers was dead, and Miss Nina in the hands of Buck Jarvis, whom Kate believed to be her step-father.

What was the poor ignorant woman to do? Every neighbor had a different plan, and all agreed to disagree, except on one point. That was to send for the police to take care of the house, for fear that it might be broken open at night.

And one of the neighbors' boys volunteered to go to the station-house, as the afternoon drew forward, to tell the captain.

Kate accepted the offer with gratitude, and the boy departed on his errand, while the lonely woman began to experience a vague sense of comfort in gossiping on the case with every one who would listen to her, which meant every girl in the row of little houses in West — street.

There were seven or eight in the row, with open lots opposite, and the blocks above and below were masses of rock, about fifty feet above the grade of the street, crowned with dilapidated-looking shanties, waving clothes-lines, adorned with shirts, flocks of goats, and ragged small boys, who passed their lives, to all appearance, in stoning the goats and yelling opprobrious language to each other.

The second block, toward the North river went by the pleasant name of "Murder Row" in the language of the police; and altogether the forlornly respectable range of frame cottages in which the Somers family lived resembled a very small flock of lambs set down in the midst of a land inhabited by wolves and eagles.

It was in this row that Nina Somers and her quiet white-haired mother had lived for six months prior to the opening of this story, never going out at nights, and leading a very quiet and secluded existence.

Kate O'Donnell had come with them, and had kept an unusually close mouth for one of her class, so that no one in the row knew much about the Somers family till that eventful Decoration Day.

Now, just as Kate was waxing grandiloquent in her description of "the missis," as once "a rich lady and one of the best in the land," they were startled by the rumble of wheels, and saw a hack driving furiously to the house, with Buck Jarvis on the box by the driver.

Kate turned pale and hurried into the house, all in a tremble, while the neighbors scattered.

CHAPTER V.

A MODEL PARENT.

WHEN Nina Somers was left alone in the hack by her young protector, she sunk into a corner, all trembling, and began to cry. She never doubted that her mother was dead; for, in the moment before she lost her senses in the panic, she had a vision of the helpless avalanche of people coming headlong down the stairs, her mother in the midst of them, falling.

She had been dimly sensible of being caught up by some one, and after that all was a blank, till she came to her senses in the arms of the handsomest young man she had ever seen, and beheld the bloody stretchers carried past her.

After that, all seemed a confused dream of horror, till she found herself driving slowly up Chatham street in the crush of cars and carriages, with a card clasped mechanically in her hand, wondering whether she was awake or asleep.

Presently the hack stopped in a crush of vehicles, and she saw a big, burly man climb up on the box, with his face turned away from her.

Supposing him to be a friend of the driver, she paid no attention to him, and remained sunk in her gloomy reflections in the corner of the carriage, till the vehicle got out of the crush and began to drive rapidly up-town, over some rough cobble-stones.

Still, she paid no attention to anything, till, after a long drive with many turns, the hack suddenly rolled on smooth boards, and stopped in front of what she saw was a ferry-house.

Then she became intensely alarmed, and put her head out of the window, crying:

"Driver! driver! This is not the way! Where are you going?"

A face looked down from the box—a face she knew only too well, cut and disfigured as it was, and Buck Jarvis answered:

"You keep still in there, Nina. I'm your dad, and you've got to obey me now. You keep still. I'm taking you home."

Nina turned as white as chalk, and sunk back into the corner again.

Too well she remembered that coarse, brutal face in days of the past, when she was a child, and the big brute used to beat her.

In her terror and loneliness she was not able to collect her thoughts so as to appeal for help to any one.

The ascendancy Jarvis had acquired over her as a child by his cruelty seemed to sweep over her now, and she clasped her hands, moaning to herself:

"What shall I do? what shall I do?"

The very action of clasping her hands made

the edge of the card she had held all along cut into her palm, and drew her attention to it.

For the first time she looked at it closely, and read to herself:

THOMAS HARVEY.

Attorney & Counselor,

(With SMITH, BROWN & SMITH,) 278 Broadway.

For a moment she was bewildered.

"What's this? Who gave it me?"

Then she remembered the handsome gentleman who had saved her life and thrust the card into the bosom of her dress furtively.

The action was an instinctive one. She had no clear idea why she did it, except for fear Jarvis might see it, and with a vague notion that the strange gentleman might be able to help her.

Then she heard the ferry-gate clang open, and the hack rolled into the ferry-boat before she could muster her senses to think what to do.

When the vehicle stopped, she saw the big man climb down from the box and Buck Jarvis came to the door and looked in, saying with a scowl:

"So ye were goin' to run away with that young dude, were ye, Nina? It was lucky yer dad happened to be round just at the right time, to keep yer from disgracin' the family. Hey! What d'ye say?"

Nina was very pale, and her lips could hardly frame the reply:

"I was going home."

"Home!" echoed Jarvis with a sneer. "Yes, that's a likely story. Don't ye know yer mother's dead, and I've got charge of ye now? Say? Don't ye know it, gal?"

His voice was harsh, brutal and threatening, and the girl cowered back into the corner, whispering:

"Don't hurt me, please. I didn't know it."

Buck Jarvis grinned. He was satisfied with his triumph and proceeded:

"Yes. She's gone, and we'll let bygones be bygones. Her and you has treated me bad all these years; kep' away from me when I wanted to take keer of ye and bring ye up decent; but I ain't bearin' no malice. Where have ye b'en a-stayin' all this time?"

He kept his fierce eyes riveted on her face in that savage stare he used, to cow the weak; and it had its effect; for Nina faltered out the number of the street where she and her mother had lived, and Jarvis said:

"That's right. I knew it all the time, but I wanted to see if she taught ye to lie."

"My mother never lied," retorted Nina, with a little more spirit than she had yet dared to show and beginning to cry. "You ought not to say that, Mr. Jarvis."

Jarvis looked back over his shoulder a little apprehensively. He knew well enough that if Nina made any outcry in the crowded ferry-boat, there would be trouble for him, and it was necessary to keep her quiet.

So he said more gently:

"There, there. I didn't mean that; but I'm a rough kind of a snoozer, I am, and I don't al-lers choose my words. I'll go and git yer things fur ye, and you shall live like a lady."

"Where are you going to take me?" faltered the girl, helplessly.

"I'm a-goin' to take you to my house, the best place fur a young gal like you. It ain't fittin' you should be livin' alone, now yer mother's gone. Who was that young snoozer I seen ye with?"

"I don't know," faltered Nina, taking refuge in an equivocation, after the manner of all weak, persecuted creatures. "I never saw him before. He saved my life, and sent me home, while he went back to look for mother."

She said nothing of the card in her pocket, and Buck Jarvis asked:

"Don't ye know his name? How's he goin' to find ye again?"

"I gave him our address," said Nina, with a hunted, apprehensive look in her eyes.

Buck Jarvis scowled at her.

"Ye hadn't oughter done no such thing. How d'ye know what sort of a desprit krakter that feller might be? You ain't fit to take keer of yourself, Nina, and it's my dooty as yer dad, to look arter your morils. I'm mighty glad I cum acrost ye, to save ye from a designin' villain."

And Mr. Jarvis inflated his manly bosom with an air of Roman virtue, slightly marred by the black and blue puffing of one eye, a split lip, and the general traces of his late battle with the deceiving dude.

The rattle of the chains, as the boat reached Brooklyn, cut short further conversation, and Jarvis opened the door and got in beside the girl, saying:

"I'm yer dad, and I ain't goin' to stand no games; so mind that now."

Then the hack drove on through Brooklyn, till it reached a narrow and dirty street, lined with low grog shops, at one of which it stopped, when Jarvis took Nina's arm with a firm grip and said:

"Come, gal, we're home now."

Hardly able to walk, for terror and grief, the girl submitted in silence, and was taken up

stairs, through a succession of dark and ill-smelling passages, to a dingy sitting-room, where sat two slatternly females in rockers, gossiping.

One of them, a coarse, black-haired woman, with a face that bore the marks of much rum on it, looked up with a scowl.

"What's that ye'r bringin' home, Buck?" she asked with much dignity.

Buck Jarvis puffed out his chest to answer;

"This is my darter, Nina, and I'll trouble you to speak civil to her, and take keer of her morils, Mag. This here's your new ma, Nina. She'll see you don't run away with no dudes. Take keer of her, till I come back, Mag. I'm a-goin' to git her cloze."

Mag stared at the girl from head to foot, as if inspecting a horse, saying:

"Hum! so you're Nina, are ye? I've heerd tell of you afore. Never you fear, Buck. I'll see she don't come to no harm to disgrace the family."

"Very good," said Buck briefly.

Then he turned to Nina, and his manner was changed to one of bitter malignity as he said:

"Now, I've got ye at last, and nobody won't git ye away from me. Chalk that up, my gal. I don't stand no nonsense, nuther. Chalk that up, too. I'm a-goin' to make you useful. No idlers in this shebang. Biz is biz, and we attends to it. Your ma, here, will tell you what to do, and see you do it, or the stick and your back will make acquaintance in short order. D'y'e hear? Hey! What d'ye say?"

"Yes, sir," gasped the girl in a palsy of fear, feeling like a lamb in a tiger's den.

"Then see ye don't have no cuttin's up, no nonsense," said Buck savagely. "Here, Mag, give her a wrapper fit to work in, and set her to work. Take the nonsense out of her, so she'll mind."

"You bet I will," returned the amiable Mag with a grin. "Me and Bridge McCabe, here, will git the work out of her."

"See ye do," said Buck; and then he went down-stairs, got into the back again, and drove back to the ferry, where he paid and dismissed the man, took another hack, and proceeded to the house in West — street.

As for Nina, the two women took her up to a little back room, made her take off her clothes, and put on a dirty cotton frock, covered with grease-stains, when the amiable Mag conducted her to a dirty kitchen, and, pointing to a heap of greasy crockery, said:

"Wash them dishes, and if you crack one, I'll give you what you'll remember."

CHAPTER VI.

HARVEY'S QUEST.

WHEN Thomas Harvey left the house at which Buck Jarvis, as he thought, was master, he had no very clear idea of what to do; but the brutality of the man had roused in him a determination to do something he might never have done otherwise.

"I'll find that girl if it costs me all I've got," he muttered to himself, as he drove down-town. "My duty, my oath as a lawyer, compels me to defend the friendless."

Harvey was a very young lawyer, or he might not have thought of this. He had been a clerk in the office of the great firm of Smith, Brown & Smith since his boyhood, and had been admitted to the bar a few months before the bridge episode occurred. Therefore his obligation, duly attested, to "take up the cause of the widow and fatherless," was to him, as yet, something more than a tinkling cymbal.

And a young and pretty client, in the case of a young and impulsive lawyer, is apt to wake all the chivalry of his nature.

Harvey had made up his mind to trace out the whereabouts of Nina Somers and offer her his services; for he felt sure that Buck Jarvis could have no legal control over her.

Exactly why he felt so sure he could not have told; but it was probably owing to the fact the girl had exhibited when she saw Jarvis on the bridge, and the incongruity between the bloated ruffian and the delicate, lady-like Nina Somers.

Harvey had been in a lawyer's office from the time he was twelve, and with all his effeminate ways and precise dress, was a consummate master of city tricks.

He was alone in the world, earning a good salary, and spending his leisure on the cultivation of body and mind, so that he was known in the office as the sharpest man they had, and in the athletic club, to which he belonged, as the cleverest amateur boxer and general athlete in New York, where he had taken the champion medal for three years successively in several events.

"I'll find her," he kept saying to himself as he went down-town. "I'll find her, and take her away from that brute."

It did not occur to him yet what he would do with her after he had rescued her from Buck Jarvis. Young men seldom do think of these things when pretty girls are in question.

He was roused from a perplexed reverie by the stopping of the hack, and the driver called down to him:

"And where'll I go now, sor?"

Harvey looked out and saw they were in Broadway, near the Park; so he got out and paid the man, and then started down the long line of hacks by the post-office, muttering:

"If I had only taken that man's number."

But he had a pretty good eye for faces, and soon recognized the driver to whom he had given Nina in charge.

The man had come back to the stand, and was waiting for a new fare.

Moreover, he recognized Harvey instantly, and put on a stolid, defensive look as the young man asked him:

"Where did you take that lady I told you to take to West — street?"

He took out a note-book as he spoke, and jotted down the driver's number.

"What d'ye say?" asked the driver, to gain time.

"I say where did you take that lady?"

"What lady, sir? I hain't had no lady to day."

"You had. I gave her into your charge not two hours ago, just after the panic on the bridge," said Harvey sternly. "Be careful what you say, or I'll haul you up in the police court, quick. What have you done with that lady? She did not get home, and you're back here."

"I tell ye I didn't have no lady," blustered the driver, a stout, powerful man. "Who'n blazes are ye a-talkin' to, ye long-legged dude? Fur five cents, I'd bu'st ye in the jaw, that's what I'd do."

Instantly Harvey assumed a smiling air, observing:

"Indoed? Well now, my friend, why don't you do it? I won't call a policeman for that, you know. You can't strike my jaw to save your life. Ha!"

There was the sound of a crack like a whip, and the hack man sunk down on the pavement, with a silly smile on his face.

He had struck at the dude with all his might, and had been met with a stopper, doubled in force by his own impetus, and catching him full on the side of the cheek near the temple.

It did not knock him down. He stood for an instant staring, then collapsed and dropped in a heap on the pavement, with a dazed smile on his face, while the other hackmen uttered a low "ah!" of wonder, to see the ease with which their man had been struck stupid, and nearly senseless.

The dude had taken the nonsense out of him for the time, and when he rose, which he did presently, slowly and staggering, Harvey repeated his question:

"Well, what did you do with the lady?"

The hackman rubbed his forehead in a confused manner, saying:

"Why didn't yer tell me you was a fighter? I wouldn't ha' made a fool of myself."

"Then tell me where you took that lady?" Harvey answered, sternly. "No nonsense. You have felt me once. Where did you take her?"

"Over to Buck Jarvis's place in Navy street," said the hackman, slowly. "He said he was her dad, and you was tryin' to rope in the gal."

"What sort of a place is it?" asked Harvey.

"Gin mill," was the laconic reply.

"Very well. Drive me there."

The hackman stared.

"Say, mister, you don't know the place. A man ain't got no show there. They'd double-bank you every time."

"Never mind," returned Harvey, quietly. "That's my risk. You drive me there, and I'll pay you. That's all I want."

The hackman objected no more, but opened the door of his carriage, saying:

"All right, sir. Step in. Tain't my funeral."

Harvey got in, and was driven over the Brooklyn Bridge on the carriage-way, where no traces of the accident of the day were to be seen.

Arrived at the other side, he bailed the driver, and told him to drive to a certain street he named, to a particular number.

When the hack drew up at the house, he saw a sign over the door:

"SVENSON'S ACADEMY."

"FENCING AND BOXING TAUGHT."

Harvey alighted, and went up the steps, to be met, in a large parlor, by a tall gentleman of military appearance, who burst out with a foreign accent:

"Why, Mr. Harvie, my dear, dear friend, vere did you come from? It is strange. I nevair speak of you, but you come. And you are well? Ah, my dear friend, I am glad to see you."

"Thank you, colonel," said the young man in a hearty tone, shaking hands. "I come to see you on business."

"Aha, that is good," cried the colonel, rubbing his hands. "You want to train? Ven does it come off? Vat is de weapon?"

He was a handsome man, with long pointed mustache and beard, and wore his light-gray hair quite long, with glasses on his nose.

He looked like an old soldier certainly, but

the last man one would have taken for an athlete.

Harvey smiled.

"It is not a duel. Those are gone out of date in New York—"

"Do not t'ink any such thing," interrupted the colonel warmly. "Do not say it. Did I not train a man dat won de Carizi-Fardella duel? I had him but one night, and he lay out his man in de morning."

"Yes, but this is not a duel," explained Harvey. "It is a question of rescuing a lady who has been inveigled into a very hard den."

The colonel looked serious.

"Aha, dat is defferent. Den I must go with you. You are not de old man yet. Vere is de place?"

"Buck Jarvis's in Navy street."

The colonel curled his lip.

"Is dat all? He is no fighter. He is but the leader of a gang."

"I know that. I laid him out myself to-day on the bridge."

The colonel patted him affectionately on the shoulder, saying:

"Dat is my Apollo boy. Did I not tell you dat de brain is bettair dan de muscle? Now tell me, vat you vant?"

"Briefly this: Buck Jarvis has taken a young lady I know into his place, and I believe he means her harm. I'm going to get her out. He claims to be her step-father, but I don't believe the story as a lawyer, and I want to get her out into a safe place where that villain can only get at her in a legal manner, if he has any rights at all, which I doubt. Will you help me?"

The colonel smiled.

"Vat a question! Vill I help my favorite pupil? Of course I help you. We will go there—when?"

"The sooner the better."

The colonel went to an inner room and soon returned, dressed in the same neat and dandified fashion as his young friend, whom he accosted briefly, saying:

"Are you armed?"

"No, colonel. You told me not to carry any pistol, and I don't."

"You are right at most time. But dis is a special occasion. Put dis in your pocket."

He handed him an ivory-handled revolver of rather small size, but carrying a large ball, with the observation:

"It is a self-cocker. You can use it. And here. Dese brass-knuckles will cut. The rest will have them, and we cannot afford to be hurt by these villain. Put dem on, and wear de gloves over dem so. Now we are ready for Senor Jarvis. Come."

They went outside and the colonel sent away the hack, remarking:

"We shall not want it; leave dat to me."

Then they set out on foot, through the back streets of Brooklyn, till they approached the classic purlieus of Navy street, when the colonel observed:

"Now we go in to take a drink. Remember you only pretend. One cannot be too careful in dese places. I am old sport and I tell you vat I know, aba?"

He entered the house next door to Buck Jarvis's place as he spoke.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GANG AND THE COTERIE.

MR. JARVIS'S "shebang" gloried in the title of "The Retreat," wherefore the gentleman next door, a professional rival of Mr. Jarvis, denominated his palace "The Advance."

Mr. Jarvis's patrons were known as the "Old Gang," wherefore Mr. Blessing, his neighbor, organized the "Coterie Club," as something equally literary and fashionable, while a spice of muscle in the club had induced more than one free fight between the patrons of the rival houses, in which "honors were easy" as far as damage was concerned.

Mr. Blessing was a large, stout German, who had been a "Turner," till the girth of his waist made him too heavy to go on the horizontal bar any more, when he retired behind the beer bar and contented himself with preaching the superiority of the Turnverein to all other athletic clubs.

When the colonel came in, he found the stout figure of the German, standing behind the said bar, serving beer to a crowd of young men who were sitting smoking at the round tables, all talking together, while the waiters hurried to and fro.

Decoration Day had brought the usual crowds, and Blessing was smiling.

The colonel and his young companion went to the rear of the saloon, where the windows opened on a back yard, and took the only vacant table, when they rapped and were served.

As the colonel paid, he said to the waiter in German:

"The people next door, are they German?"

The waiter sneered bitterly.

"No. They're Americaner, and bad. One can have no peace for them. But we can give an account of ourselves when we cry *Bahn Frei!*" [clear the way.]

When the waiter went off, the colonel said to Harvey in a low tone:

"It is as I thought. They are rival houses. These men will help us, if we go about it the right way. Throw your beer out of the window; pretend to drink, and we'll order more. We must get up a fight here."

They sent for the waiter a second time, and when he came, the colonel said blandly:

"Those Americaners next door are boasting that they are going to clean out your place today. Did you know it?"

The waiter was a stout athletic Turner and he flushed up angrily saying:

"No. They can't do it."

"If I were you," retorted the colonel, "I would be beforehand with them, and clean them out first."

The waiter grinned and went off.

Very soon they saw him moving round among the tables, and saw that wherever he went he produced a great excitement.

A German in middle age is apt to be stolid and hard to move; but young Germans, and especially young German Americans, with a little beer on board, can be as impulsive as Italians.

Within five minutes the talking had changed to an ominous murmur, and the colonel whispered Harvey:

"They'll be ready to fight in a minute. Let us go into the other place."

"All right," was the answer, though the young man turned a shade paler and closed his lips firmly, for he knew that the decisive moment was coming, and he was not an "old sport," like his friend, the colonel.

They paid for their beer and strolled out, followed by many curious eyes, and, once in the street, the colonel said:

"Now for next door. Follow me, and do as I do. Let no one get behind you. The Old Gang has some ugly fighters in it."

He stepped into the "Retreat" and found there a very different scene from that in the "Advance."

The one was a beer saloon, the other a rum-hole; and the difference in the class of custom was expressed by the difference between beer and whisky.

The room was dark, compared to the other; there were no tables, but a crowd of beetled-browed men, with savage faces, were lounging about the room or drinking at the bar.

The entrance of the strangers produced an immediate bush, and the bar-keeper was all smiles, as the colonel walked up to the bar, threw down a five-dollar bill, and said:

"Drinks for de crowd out of dat. We've just come in from California, boys. Name your poison, as dey say on de Pacific Slope."

Instantly a broad grin illuminated every face, the savages became lambs, and they crowded up to the bar, where the clink of glasses became deafening till the colonel remarked quietly:

"I say, boys, who knows de Dutchmen in de next house? I was in dere just now, and dey said dey was coming in to clean out dis shebang. Vat you say?"

"Clean out this shebang?" cried the bar-keeper aghast. "It don't lie in the boots of that 'ere crowd to do it. What d'ye say, boys?"

There was a burst of scornful laughter, and the colonel continued:

"Well, boys, I tell you vat dey do in de Pacific Slope, when dey hear dat."

"What?" asked one lowering ruffian.

The colonel laughed.

"Get up first in de morning, and do de clean out for demselfs."

"That's what we'd better do," quoth the man; but he spoke slowly, and it was evident that he didn't like the job any more than his friends; for they all hung back.

The colonel slapped the bar.

"All hands anoder drink, bar-keeper. It'll put de fighting-stuff into de boys."

The proposition suited all hands and the drink had its effect, for the men began to saunter to the door.

The biggest in the crowd went outside and they heard a noise next door.

Then came the clash of broken glass and the colonel shouted:

"Now, boys, sail in. The fun's begun."

In a moment every one was rushing to the door, and the saloon emptied; in another, of all but the bar-keeper, who picked up a club and was coming out from behind the bar, when the colonel said softly:

"Stop. I show you better way. We come in, back here, by de yard. We scare 'em."

The bar-keeper grinned and poised his club.

"We'll sweeten their coffee for 'em," he said. "Come through the kitchen."

He opened the back door and was leading them out, when the colonel, who was close behind him, suddenly dealt him a blow with his fist on the nape of the neck and the bar-keeper dropped like a log.

"Now quick, my boy," said the veteran rapidly. "If de lady is here, find her. Run up de stairs, anyver. Jarvis is not 'ere; dat I know."

Harvey needed no further advice. In another moment he was opening and shutting doors and running up-stairs to the next floor.

He heard the sound of a coarse woman's voice scolding violently, and burst into the dingy sitting-room, where he found the object of his search, Nina Somers, crouching in a corner, while the amiable Mag was loading her with abuse.

"You lazy good-for-nothing," shrieked Mag. "Didn't I tell you if you cracked a thing I'd make you rue it?"

"I didn't mean it," pleaded Nina. "You startled me and it dropped."

"I'll startle ye more," screamed Mag, and she ran back to pick up a broom, when Harvey, who had been too much amazed at first to interfere, suddenly seized the virago by the shoulders and sent her flying into a corner with more violence than he had intended, so that she fell down in a sitting posture with a grunt.

"Come with me, Miss Somers," he said to the trembling Nina, who cast one glance at him, uttered a scream of joy, and rushed to meet him, almost leaping to his arms in her terror and relief.

He saw that she had on only an old cotton wrapper, and asked her:

"Where have they put your dress?"

"Up-stairs," she said hurriedly. "There's no one there. Will you protect and take me home?"

"I will, so help me God," he said fervently.

Then he took her to the door and saw her dart up-stairs, just as the amiable Mag recovered her senses to get up and cry out:

"Who are you and how dare you come here?"

Harvey had made up his mind what to do, and he turned on her sharply, saying:

"I'm a detective. Hold your tongue, or I'll run you in at once for kidnapping that girl. Not a word out of you now, or I'll put on the handcuffs. Where's Buck Jarvis?"

"Oh, if he was here, you wouldn't talk to an honest woman that way!" whined Mag, in the criminal strain Harvey had often heard in a police court. "He'd run you out, darned quick. He's in with all the cops."

"He is, is he?" said Harvey sharply. "Perhaps he's in with the central office too. You keep a still tongue, or your place will be shut up before sunset. I've got fifty men waiting to pull you. Are you Jarvis's wife?"

"Yes, I'm his wife," said Mag sullenly. "He ain't got no other wife, since she died, and, that gal's our darter. You'll pay fur this when Buck comes home. You see if you don't, mister."

She tried to pass him, but he threw her back, saying sternly:

"You stay there till I tell you to go."

Then he called up stairs.

"Hurry, Miss Somers! Quick!"

"Coming!" cried a soft voice, and then he heard a great crashing of glass below, and Mag dashed by him, screaming at the top of her voice:

"Thieves! Murder-r-r-r!"

Harry knew well enough what it was. The German Turners had repulsed the Rum Brigade, and the "Advance" was storming the "Retreat," with indications that the "Old Gang" was getting the worst of it.

For a moment he hesitated, and then he heard the colonel's voice below, shouting:

"Dis way! dis way!"

Then he saw Nina Somers flit down from the upper story, pale and trembling, and she clung to his arm whispering:

"Take me away, for God's sake, before I faint."

"You must not faint," he said, as sharply as he dared to speak. "If you faint it will make things twice as hard. Lean on me."

"Quick! Quick!" cried the colonel below, and Harvey hurried Nina down-stairs, where his friend dashed with him down a dark passage and out of the side door into a narrow street, where a furious free fight was raging, with no police in sight.

CHAPTER VIII. CARRYING OFF A PRIZE.

THE two friends paused a moment at the door.

To be burdened with a lady within a few feet of a street-fight, with beer glasses flying, is a decidedly unpleasant position; but the colonel was an old campaigner and made up his mind in a moment.

He saw that the crowd lay between the "Advance" and the "Retreat," while the street on one side was clear for a short distance.

"Take de lady up de street," he said to Harvey. "I will cover de retreat."

Harvey stepped out, whispering to Nina:

"Courage. Don't run; but walk fast. We'll be out of this in a little time."

They set off up the street and the colonel remained standing in the doorway till he saw they were at a safe distance, when he set off himself, walking slowly, and often looking back.

The combatants were evidently tired of the fight, for they had begun to shout at each other, while the crowd outside packed the street at a respectful distance on either side, to look on.

Through one of these crowds Harvey and Nina were making their way, and seemed to have some difficulty in so doing.

The colonel quickened his pace and came up with them in time to see that the elegant appearance of the young man had attracted attention and jealousy, so that insolent remarks were being bandied about him and his companion.

"Say, fellers, look at the dude."

"What's that thing a-comin'?"

"It's a sick dude and his mash."

"Some of you fellers hit him a crack."

"Oh my! ain't she sweet?"

"Ain't he a daisy?"

"Take him in out of the sun."

"Oh, Jawge! Go 'way!"

They had not impeded him yet, but kept walking backward before him, when the colonel suddenly came up, edged his way into the crowd, digging his elbows into the ribs of the passers-by, strode past Harvey and Nina as if he had noticed nothing; and caught one of the annoying roughs by the collar.

In another instant the man's feet flew up in the air and he came down on his back with a thud, when the colonel sent another man to earth with a blow on the neck that stunned him, and burst out laughing, crying:

"Why, gentlemen, don't you know dat de station has been alarmed, and de police are coming on de next block? You must get into de house quick. Ve hafe business. Now, Harvey, round de corner."

In the same moment Harvey took the hint, went round the corner, and to his great joy saw a hack standing at the end of the block, with the driver on the pavement, toward whom he hurried.

The crowd behind, recovering from their surprise at the colonel's interference, began to bluster and threaten, when the veteran, with a skill and activity that amazed them, suddenly "saile in," striking out on one side and kicking on the other, laying out the clumsy roughs like children, more than one being knocked senseless by his blows, when he started up the side street at a run just as Harvey got Nina into the hack and the driver, alarmed at the shouting crowd, jumped on his box.

The colonel ran like a deer for a short distance till he reached the carriage, when he climbed up, while the driver was turning out, and got on the box beside him, saying hurriedly:

"Drive like de devil. I keep dem back."

The crowd, increased to over a hundred people, came tearing up the street, and stones began to fly round the carriage, as the scared driver whipped up his horses and went away at a rapid pace.

Crash! went a stone through the rear window, and they heard a scream inside, when the colonel whipped out his pistol and fired at the leaders of the crowd.

The bullet went singing on its way and struck a cobble-stone, knocking up a shower of splinters and dust, when the whole crowd halted like magic, and the coach began to gain rapidly.

"Keep her up," said the veteran between his teeth to the driver. "Go for de big street. I will hit some one, if dey come on again."

But they did not come on.

Whether it was the hopelessness of the chase or the pistol-shot that scared them, they ran but a little further, and then gave it up, when the colonel quietly put up his pistol and called down:

"Any one hurt inside?"

"No," said Harvey's voice. "Only frightened a little. Where do you go?"

"To my house, of course," answered the colonel and on they went at a rapid pace, till they entered the more frequented streets, when they were able to slacken up, and the colonel gave the driver directions where to go.

"How you come to be standing at dat door?" he pursued, as the driver drove on.

"Goin' to have a wedding," was the answer, "but I reckon I've time to get back before the minister comes. I seen somethin' was up when the lady and gent come a-running. Then when I seen the crowd, I knowed it warn't no place for a coach; so I lit out."

"And just in time," commented the colonel. "Dat could not have happen better. Now you go up dis street and here we are."

They arrived in front of the fencing-school and the veteran got down and handed out the young lady. Then he said to Harvey:

"Go inside. Here is the latch-key. I come in a minit. I see de drivair."

Harvey hurried Nina up the steps and the colonel turned to the driver:

"How much do you want, ha?"

"Bout three dollar," was the answer.

"And how much you want to keep your mouth shut tight?"

The driver grinned.

"Bout what?"

"About vere you come—eh?"

The driver scratched his head.

"Reckon I don't want nothin'. Tain't no biz of mine. We drivers sees and hears a deal."

The colonel handed him a five dollar-bill.

"Stick to dat. I remember you ven Is ee you again. You keep de change."

The driver grinned and nodded; then drove off; when the colonel came up the steps into his boxing-parlor, and found Nina Somers seated on a lounge, with the handsome young lawyer bending over her. The girl seemed to be completely overcome, now that her peril was over, and Harvey looked frightened and bewildered.

"What am I to do?" be asked the colonel. "I'm afraid she's going to die."

The veteran came up and looked at the girl for a moment, then said to Harvey:

"You go to de nex' room. You vill find de speaking-tube dere. Call de senora. Dis ladee need a woman vid her, dat is all."

Harvey flushed up to his temples and ran into the next room to the speaking tube.

"The senora," was the colonel's mother, a dear old Spanish lady with white hair, who lived in the upper part of the house and never went near the boxing-rooms till sent for, but who was the sole support of the house in a hospitable way.

She knew Harvey's voice, and called back:

"Is dat you, Senor 'Arvia? Welcome! I come downna raight avay."

And very soon she bustled in, a spare little lady with sparkling black eyes, who cried out:

"Eh, carrai! Vat is dis, Diego? A ladee Here!"

The colonel broke into a long explanation in rapid Spanish, so rapid that Harvey lost the thread of the remarks, and the old lady listened and nodded, then went to Nina, saying:

"Come vid me, mia querida."

The girl had been lying back on the lounge, her eyes closed, half insensible to what was going on, till she heard the soft feminine tones of the old senora.

Instantly she opened her eyes, burst into a flood of tears and sobbed out:

"Oh take care of me, take care of me. My mother is dead, dead!"

The old lady made a silent signal to her son and said to Nina, reassuringly:

"No von s'all hurt you. Can you walk? You come vid me. I take care of you."

Nina rose up, trembling and clinging to the old lady's arm, when the senora said:

"You cannot walk. Diego s'all carry you. He is my son. You are not afraid?"

Nina looked round, and there was something in the grave kind face of the veteran that seemed to reassure her, for she said faintly:

"Thank you. I'm very weak. I fear I am going to be sick."

The colonel nodded.

"Dat is all raight. I carry you, and ve send for de doctor."

Then he picked her up as if she had been a child and carried her off to the upper regions while Harvey paced up and down the boxing-room till his friend came back and said to him with an air of great satisfaction:

"It is all raight," De senora say she onlee frightened. Now tell me my friend, who is dis ladee. You are young man. She have parent?"

Harvey sat down and told the whole story, the veteran listening and tugging his mustache in a thoughtful manner till he had finished, when the older man said;

"You have act like gentleman. But you say de modair vas killed. Dat is bad. De ladee she haf no relative, but dis Buck Jarvis. Dat is bad."

"But I don't believe he can be a relative," said Harvey earnestly. "Consider. They have different names. The most he can be is a step-father."

The colonel shrugged his shoulders.

"Dat is all raight. I do not know de law. But vat you do vid de ladee? You are young man. Ve must find de relative. She cannot stay here, you know, very long and den—vat you going to do—ha?"

Harvey colored deeply.

"I don't know. I fancy that—"

"You fancee vot?" said the colonel as the young man hesitated.

"I fancy," said Harvey in a low tone, "that there would be only one way out of it, in honor to myself and the lady. I must act as her lawyer, unless she will give me a nearer title."

The colonel looked puzzled.

"Vat you mean?"

"I mean I must either be her counsel or her husband."

The colonel rubbed his hands.

"You are right."

CHAPTER IX.

NINA'S PROTECTOR.

HARVEY seemed to be satisfied with the approval of his friend, for he rose up with a brighter face, observing:

"One thing is clear. She is alone and friendless, and it is my duty, as a lawyer, to befriend her and take up her cause. To-morrow she may be able to give me some account of her family, that I may know what to do for her. In the mean time her mother's body lies over at the Morgue probably, and I will go and see that it is provided for. Do you think she could tell

me anything to-night without harm? Ask the senora if it is safe."

"The colonel went up-stairs and came down in a little while, saying:

"De ladee vill see you."

Overjoyed at the answer, Harvey went up and found Nina lying back in a large rocker, dressed in a loose wrapper, her hair unbound, a wet cloth round her forehead.

"She 'ave headache," explained the senora, "She vant say somet'ing to you, senor. Do not spik mucha. She bettair to-morrow."

Harvey went to the girl, whose eyes were closed, and she put out a hand, saying:

"You're—very kind—very kind. Never forget it. You saved my life—twice. Never thanked you."

"Don't think of it," murmured Harvey, pressing her hand. "I only did what any man would have done. I wish I could ask you one or two questions, in order to preserve you from that man's power."

She still kept her eyes shut, but whispered:

"Ask on: I'll tell you."

"What is that man Jarvis to you?" he asked.

"My step-father," she answered.

"He was separated from your mother, I suppose," said Harvey, feeling his way.

"Yes; for years. We were hiding from him," she murmured. "We thought he was far away in California."

"Very good," said Harvey. "Now tell me this: has he any right in your house in West street?"

She shook her head.

"My mother's money is her own, she told me; but she feared him."

"Why?"

The girl shuddered.

"He was so cruel. We had to run away ten years ago."

Then she opened her eyes, asking feebly:

"Can he take me away? Has he any right? Could he get me from here?"

"Have no fears," returned Harvey, firmly. "He cannot get you from the colonel, and as soon as you are well enough to talk fully on the subject I can protect you. Have you any relatives to whom you can go?"

The girl closed her eyes again, and her lips trembled as she said, faintly:

"No. They were angry with mother for her marriage."

"How long ago did she marry Jarvis?"

"Fifteen years," answered Nina, with a shudder. "I was five years old then."

"And your mother lived with him five years, as I understand."

"Yes. Oh, I shall never forget them. He was a fine-looking man when mother married him, and pretended to love me. But he began to be so cruel—oh, so cruel."

She shuddered violently, and Harvey said:

"There. Don't think of it now. Have you any property in the house that he can take away, and can your girl, Kate, be depended upon?"

Nina smiled faintly.

"Poor Katie! She has been with us twelve years. Yes. You can depend on her."

"Very well," said Harvey. "When will you be twenty-one, if it's a fair question?"

"Next year," was the answer and Nina opened her eyes inquiringly.

Harvey nodded and smiled.

"Then we are all right, I think," he said. "I want you to sign a letter I will write, authorizing me to act for you. To-morrow be ready to give me the names and addresses of some of your father's or mother's relatives, who can act as guardians to you, till you come of age. I will communicate with them. In the mean time I will go to the house, and take charge of things for you. It will not be safe for you to go there, for he might force his way in and capture you again."

Nina's eyes had opened wide in fear, and she said earnestly:

"I'll do anything you think best. Anything to escape falling into his hands again."

"You shall not," said Harvey in his most reassuring tone. "We'll prevent that at any hazard, Miss Somers. Now I'll write."

He wrote a short letter, which she signed, and he went away, saying as he departed:

"You shall hear from me soon."

He had reached the door, when she said:

"Mr. Harvey—"

In a moment he was back.

Very faintly she said:

"My mother—did you find—"

"I did," he said gravely. "Rest satisfied. I will see that everything is done in proper order and well."

She covered her face with her hands.

"Poor mother!" she said in a low tone. "She is better off than I. Oh, how can I bear to be left all alone?"

"You are not all alone while I am near to help you," said Harvey softly. "Remember that I will never desert you, till you no longer need a friend. Good-by."

Then he went away for good and, once in the street, made his way to the ferry and thence up town in New York to West — street, where he arrived just in time to see a hack driving

furiously up the street, ahead of him, with Buck Jarvis on the box by the driver.

Harvey took a glance at his surroundings, when he saw the hack.

He was alone, on foot, and he knew well that the neighborhood was a "rough" one. The rocks and shanties between the blocks and the tumble-down rookery of "Murder Row" in the distance were not unknown to him by reputation; for Smith, Brown & Smith had a good deal of criminal practice, in which their managing clerk, Harvey, had figured at various times, hunting up the evidence of witnesses.

He had never been in "Murder Row," but he knew some of the men who lived there (when they lived anywhere), and made up his mind that trouble lay ahead, if Buck Jarvis had any friends among them.

He did not yet know who Jarvis was, save that he was a ruffian, but it was evident that his destination was the little house in which Nina had lived that morning.

As he watched the coach drive up, he saw several women, who had been sitting on the front steps of the house, get up and run away into other houses, while the robust form of Kate O'Donnell vanished.

CHAPTER X.

A LITTLE STREET AFFAIR.

THE young man waited at the end of the block till he saw Buck Jarvis stop, run up the steps and begin to pull the bell and knock at the front-door, while two other men got out of the hack and began to try the lower windows.

Then Harvey saw that something very unusual was the matter.

He had imagined, when he went away in the morning, that Buck Jarvis had gone into the house on his departure. Now, it seemed as if Buck could not get in.

Was it possible that Kate O'Donnell had had pluck enough to keep him out?

"By heavens, she has!" he muttered, as he noted the fact that Buck was unable to gain an entrance, though the noise of his thundering at the door echoed to the end of the block.

Presently he saw Kate's head poked out of an upper window, and heard her screaming:

"Murder! thaves! murder!"

At this there was a cessation of the pounding below, and Buck Jarvis roared:

"Come down and open the door, Irish, or I'll bu'st it open, and have ye 'rested!"

"Ye'll be 'risted yerself!" screamed Katie. "Ye've no business here, ye murderer' thase, and I've sir' 'or the police, so I have."

"Police be durned!" roared Jarvis. "Here's two of 'em now. Show yer shields, boys."

The moment Harvey heard that, he started off on a run toward the party.

He still retained the pistol his friend the colonel had lent him, and had on his hands, concealed by gloves, the terrible brass knuckles that are as effective as clubs in skillful hands well used.

He felt sure Jarvis was deceiving the girl, and feared that she would surrender to the idea of police.

As he came near, the three men heard the echo of his steps, and turned to look, when he shouted at the top of his voice:

"Don't trust him, Kate; they're not police."

Buck Jarvis heard him, said something in a low tone to his men, and all three started out to meet him on the sidewalk, in ominous silence.

Harvey watched them closely as they came, but saw they had no clubs, convincing him that the two men could not possibly be police. All three kept their hands in their pockets, and began to spread as they came, to take him on either side.

There was no longer a shadow of a doubt that they meant to attack him.

As they came closer he recognized the face of one of the men as that of a professional burglar, who had been defended by his firm about a year before and acquitted on an alibi. So he called out at once:

"Look out there, Jimmy Nelson. You ought to know who I am."

Jimmy Nelson started, and said something to Buck Jarvis, who retorted aloud:

"Don't keer a darn who he is! You know the terms—you kin get 'em if you wade in."

So saying, he advanced with the other man, while Jimmy Nelson, after a moment of hesitation, came on also, saying:

"Can't help it, Mister Harvey. Git up and dust, or we'll have to slog ye."

"You will, will you?" cried Harvey, jumping into the road, so as to get his assailants in a line. "Forewarned is forearmed, Nelson. Back! or you'll be sorry for it!"

"Double-bank him, boys!" cried Buck, and as he spoke he drew from his pocket a slung-shot on a short handle, with which he rushed at Harvey, followed by the other two, all, from their eager, savage expression, intent on finishing their man quickly.

Harvey saw them coming, and fled up the street at a pace that enabled them to follow in

the hope of catching him, though he could have distanced them easily, being a champion runner up to a mile.

As he had expected, the pursuit soon caused the three to separate, Nelson being ahead, till a good hundred feet divided him from the rest, when Harvey slacked up as if exhausted, allowing the burglar to gain on him.

When the sound of footsteps told that only a few feet divided them, the young man stopped and whirled round so suddenly that before Nelson could aim a good blow his wrist was caught, and he received a right-hander in the face which split open his cheek and knocked him dizzy.

In an instant the slung-shot was clutched by the active Harvey as it dropped from the burglar's nerveless clasp, and the young man dealt his opponent a single blow on the nape of the neck, under which Nelson fell like a log.

Then Harvey bounded like a deer toward his remaining adversaries, waving the slung-shot and crying:

"Double-bank me, will you? Look out!" He ran full speed on Buck Jarvis, and the big bully turned and ran to one side.

The second man, a short, square-built fellow, with a determined jaw, met Harvey fairly and both struck at each other.

Harvey saw the blow coming just in time to stop his own and change it to a parry as he passed.

The two leaden bullets clashed together, and then, with an active turn of his own wrist, the young man brought his weapon on the back of his opponent's hand, disabling it for a moment, and extorting a grunt of pain.

The next moment he had executed the same trick as he had on the first man, mastering one wrist with his left hand and plying the other rapidly.

It takes very little work with the slung-shot to do the business, and three blows had not passed when Harvey's foe sunk on the ground senseless, when the young man felt a blow behind him that struck him on the shoulder, nearly breaking his collar-bone, and realized that he had let Buck Jarvis steal a march on him.

He did not stop and turn to fight, for it flashed over him that would be useless; but instinctively he threw himself forward as if falling, whirled over on his back and began to kick violently, just in time to catch Jarvis in the ribs with both heels.

Had he remained erect he must have received a second blow, probably on the head, which must have finished him, but as it was, he knocked the breath out of Buck's body for long enough to enable himself to spring up and get out of further harm's way.

Then, grinding his teeth to keep down a groan of pain, he came at Buck once more, vengeance in his eye.

But Buck did not dare to face him fairly.

He backed away, flourishing his weapon, and crying out:

"You keep 'way from me or I'll shoot."

As he spoke he put his left hand to his hip in search of a pistol: remembered that it was on the other side, and hurriedly changed his hands.

The momentary indecision was fatal to him, for, quick as a flash, Harvey was on him, and had disabled his wrist with a blow, extorting a howl of pain, when the dude tripped up Buck by a sudden kick, and held the slung-shot over him, saying:

"Now, give in, or, by Heavens, I'll end all your villainies."

Buck saw, quailed and faltered:

"D'y'e want to murder me? I cave."

Harvey turned him over unresistingly, and took the pistol from his pocket.

"That's safer in my charge than yours," he said with cold sarcasm. "Now get up and out of this, if you're sensible."

Buck Jarvis scrambled up, grimacing with pain, and backed away, holding his hurt wrist and growling:

"All right, all right; I'll be even with you yet fur this."

"You can do as you please about that," said Harvey; "but all I've got to say is this: you keep away from this house, if you value your life."

Buck Jarvis made no reply, but went to the back and drove away down the street in the direction of "Murder Row," picking up, on the way, his two battered companions, who began to recover slowly from the effects of their drubbing.

As for Harvey, he went to the Somers House and called up to Katie:

"Come down, Katie, and don't be afraid.

I've found Miss Nina for you."

Kate uttered a cry of joy and hurried to the door.

Before entering, Harvey took a last glance down the street toward Murder Row. He saw the hack stop, and three men get out, and go into one of the shanties.

Then the hack drove away, and he felt a thrill in his heart as he looked at the setting sun, realized that darkness was coming on, and that the three villains were still in the neighborhood, with half a hundred more ready to

help them, while he had a lame shoulder and a flimsy frame house to defend.

Just then Kate opened the door, beaming with joy, ejaculating:

"Oh, Holy Fathers, sur, and is it true? Have ye found Miss Nina, the darlin'?"

CHAPTER XI.

THE TIN BOX.

"I've found Miss Nina," said Harvey, in a hurried way; "but that's not the question now, Kate. Where's the nearest police-station to be found?"

Kate mentioned a place about ten blocks away, adding:

"Sure I sint Jimmy Fitzpatrick there, iver so long ago, and sorra sight have I seen of him since, sur."

"Who was Jimmy? Did he live in this row, or up on the rocks?" asked Harvey.

"Sure he lives up in me cousin Mike's row, sur, over beyant on the hill."

She pointed over to a high rock bluff, left by the blasters, exactly opposite Murder Row, and Harvey eagerly asked:

"Have you a cousin lives over there?"

"Yis, sur. Mike Fitzgerald's a good boy, so he is, and he works on the Bullivard."

"Then Jimmy has never gone after the police," observed Harvey, thoughtfully, "or maybe they've stopped him on the way. I say, Kate—"

"Yis, sur."

"Would you dare to hold this house, if I went for the police?"

Kate began to tremble again. Before the young man's arrival she had been brave; but the prospect of being alone again was so appalling that she faltered:

"Oh, sur, they nearly broke down the door last time. Av they came while you were away what w'u'd I do? And they'd see ye goin', sure, and know I wus alone."

"That's true, Kate. Well, suppose I stay and take charge of the house—would you dare go and fetch the police?"

Kate seemed struck with the idea.

"Sure I c'u'd go the back way, sur, and sorra wan o' them w'u'd see me."

"Would you dare to try it?" asked Harvey.

Kate hesitated a moment, and took a deep breath.

"I think I w'u'd, sir, if 'twere for Miss Nina."

"It is for Miss Nina. Tell me, did Jarvis get into the house to-day?"

"Sorra wan of him, sur. He tould me he had Miss Nina, and wanted her cloze."

"He did have her, but I've got her safe now. I don't think he knows it yet. He can never find her where she is. But I think he has some motive for wanting to get into this house."

"He'll not get in while I'm here," said Kate stoutly. "I know what he wants, the thafe."

"Indeed? What's that?"

"The black box, sur."

"What black box, Kate?"

"The wan wid the papers, sur."

Harvey felt interested at once.

"Have you a box here with papers? To whom do they belong?"

"To the poor mistress, sur."

"Then they belong to Miss Nina now. See here, Kate, can you read?"

"Sorra wan of me, sur."

"Well, I've got a letter from Miss Nina, authorizing me to take charge of all her effects," said Harvey. "Do you dare trust me to see that box, Kate?"

Kate hesitated.

"I don't know, sur. If that thafe gets hold of it he'll stole it, sur; but what w'u'd Miss Nina say if I gave it to you and it turned out ye are another thafe?"

Harvey smiled.

"Look me in the face, Kate, and tell me if you think I'm a thief."

The Irish girl looked at him sharply, and concluded by saying:

"No, ye don't, sur. But av I give ye the box, what will ye do with it?"

Harvey looked round him. The twilight was already falling.

"If I'd known about the box when I first came in," he said, "I would have taken you and it, and gone after Miss Nina. Now that is too late. Have you any place where it can be hidden, so that if the house is broken into no one can find it?"

Kate considered a moment and clapped her hands.

"Put it in the ash-bin, sur, and cover it wid the ashes."

"The very thing, Kate. Where is it now?"

"Up stairs, sur, in the mistress's room."

"Go get it quickly, Kate, while I look out for the outside. Don't strike a light."

Kate went up-stairs and Harvey proceeded to examine the house fastenings, as to their capacity to resist a siege.

He found iron bars across the inside of the windows and doors below, surprising him by their strength, while the cellar-window was barred with iron, able to resist any ordinary assault.

Back and front of the house were alike im-

pregnable to anything but crowbars able to bend iron.

Presently Kate came down-stairs with a black tin box in her arms, and he said:

"Why, Kate, your mistress made a regular fortress of this house, didn't she?"

"And why wouldn't she, sur, wid three lone women, and murderin' thaves all round us? Sure the mistress couldn't slape 'asy till she had the bars put up."

"She was right, Kate. Now, let me see that box."

He examined it in the fast-fading light and saw it to be an ordinary lawyer's depository for papers, labeled outside:

"NINA SOMERS JARVIS, 1865."

"Did your mistress drop the name Jarvis when she left her husband, Kate?" he asked.

"Sure, they had a divorce, sur, and she was afraid the ould thafe w'u'd come after her," said Kate, simply. "What'll we do wid it, sur?"

"Show me the ash-bin, Kate."

The ash-bin was in the cellar in a dark corner, and into this they dropped the box, wrapped in a newspaper, while Kate dumped two scuttles of ashes over it.

"There," said Harvey. "That's the last place any one would think of looking for it. Now, Kate, how are you going to get the police?"

Kate began to shake a little.

"I'm afraid to go, sur."

"Very well, then, I'll go, and you stay here. This house will be attacked to-night, or I don't know what I'm about."

Kate trembled worse than before.

"Holy Mother, sur, let's get out of it thin."

"But how about the box, Kate? The very police we want would stop us, suspecting us as thieves. We're not safe till morning, and not then unless the police come to our help. See here, we've no cause to fear yet. Even the men of Murderer's Row will wait till after ten o'clock before they try to break into houses. Do you think you could reach the station-house by going the back way?"

Kate drew a long breath.

"I might, sur, but av wan of them was to mate me, I'd drop, sure."

"Did you ever shoot a pistol, Kate?"

Kate shuddered.

"Oh no, sur, I'd be frekened to death."

"Well, I'll show you what to do, Kate. Come up-stairs."

They went up, securing the cellar behind them and by the remaining light at an upper window Harvey showed Kate his revolver, took out the cylinder, and made her snap the hammer again and again, till she understood how to work it.

Then he put back the cylinder, showed her how it revolved and said:

"Now, Kate, if I give you this, remember that it will kill any man you point it at. If you are waylaid on the road to the station, wait till the man nearly touches you, and fire into his breast. He won't hurt you after that. Now are afraid to go?"

Kate summoned up all her resolution and finally expressed herself willing to go.

"Now then remember," said Harvey, quietly, "I shall be alone in the house, with no pistol. Tell the captain of the precinct to send help quick, for I'm certain the Murderer's Row people are coming here to-night."

Kate was very pale and trembled a good deal but she put on her bonnet and shawl, clutched the pistol and hid it, when she said stoutly:

"I'm ready, sur. I'll do me best."

Harvey took her to the back yard, saw her out through a small door in the fence, and watched her make her way across the vacant lot till her figure was lost in the gathering gloom.

He remained at the door till it was quite dark, listening for a scream to tell him if Kate had been attacked, but heard nothing in that direction and finally went back into the house, locked the doors and prepared for his solitary vigil.

He knew that he was in great danger. Kate had got his pistol, and he began already to doubt her ability to use it. If any one tried to break into the house, the conflict would have to be one hand-to-hand in the dark, where skill would be of little avail against numbers and force.

To defend himself, he had the brass knuckles and slung-shot, with which he could make sure of at least one adversary; but if, as was probable, the assailants had fire-arms, he might be shot down easily enough.

Left alone in the dark, it is small wonder that his imagination began to get excited, and that he grew restless.

He began to wander up and down the house, looking to the fastenings, and at last went to one of the upper windows to look out.

The night was quite dark, and he could see nothing below him, for gas was one of the benefits that were yet to come in that part of the town, and he could only see the twinkling lines of light afar off beyond the limits of Murderer's Row on one side and the goat-pastures on the other.

He was looking out of the front window, up the street, congratulating himself on the silence around him, as the best hope of passing the night safely, when he saw, far away in the darkness, a little flash of light and heard the sharp crack which told him that a pistol had been fired.

He could not help a start, and then he set himself to listen intently.

Presently, far away in the darkness, he heard the sound of voices, men swearing, and a woman screaming:

"They've caught her," he muttered. "What am I to do now?"

He hesitated for a moment, then took his determination at once.

"They've got the girl," he reasoned; "they'll try to scare her into telling all she knows, and they'll do it, no doubt. What do they want? The box. It contains papers that belong to Nina, and her step-father wants to get hold of them. I can't hold this house all night. I must remove the box, or they will be here pretty soon now."

To think was to act with him, and down to the cellar he went at once.

He knew where the box was, and managed to fish it up, after striking a match with some trouble and dust.

Then he took it up-stairs, set it down on the basement floor, and listened intently again, to find if any one was near.

All was still silent, and he stole to the back door and looked out.

As he did so he thought he heard voices on the other side of the house, and he stood still to listen.

Sure enough they were voices, and he could distinguish what was going on.

"Keep still," said one. "He's a bad man to get on ye in the dark. Set it up quietly."

Set what up?

Again he listened, but heard nothing save a low, scraping sound, followed by a slight rattle and another period of silence.

What could they be doing?

There was some whispering, and then he heard a voice say in a low tone:

"Smash it in then. All in! We've got him."

The next moment came the crashing of glass on the other side of the house, the sound of steps in the upper rooms, and he realized what had happened.

His foes, whoever they were, had set up a ladder and were now on an upper floor.

As soon as he realized this, he took the box by the handle and stole across the garden out by the back door and across the vacant lots.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BAFFLED BURGLARS.

KATE O'DONNELL had been captured on the side of the rock shanties away from Murderer's Row, as Harvey had suspected.

The poor girl had pursued her way unmolested, though with much palpitation of heart, as long as the lots were perfectly dark; but when she got to the high rocks, she could go no further without entering the narrow streets between their lofty masses, and at the end of each street was a gas-lamp on the avenue beyond.

After much hesitation, Kate chose the loneliest of these streets, and hurried through it, hoping to get to the avenue in safety.

Half-way up the block, she was hailed from the lots above by a voice, crying:

"There she is, boys! Head her off!"

Instantly Kate started to run, and was stopped by a loud yell from above, seeing several dark figures come running down the rocks ahead of her, to cut her off from the avenue.

Woman-like, she hesitated, and soon saw that escape in that direction was impossible.

She turned to retrace her steps, and run back into the dark lots, hoping to hide herself, but in so doing, ran right into the peril she had hoped to avoid.

Her strength and breath alike failed her as she ran, and when she heard footsteps coming after her she was almost palsied with fear. She made a few rapid dashes here and there like a hunted hare, and finally crouched down in a hollow, hoping to be unseen, while she hastily got out the pistol she had been hiding under her shawl, and tried to cock it with her trembling hands.

Presently she saw dark figures coming up and heard the well-known voice of Buck Jarvis saying in hoarse tones:

"We've got her, boys. She's hidin' somewhere."

Then down they came on the rush and Kate, fully believing she was found out, gave a screech and fired off the pistol in the air. She aimed at no one in particular; for, in her fear, she had entirely forgotten Harvey's directions to "wait till the pistol touched the man."

She had a vague feminine idea that the shot would frighten them off, though the bullet sung through the air far away; but the next minute she heard the men swearing furiously, and down they came on her before she could cock the weapon a second time.

Buck Jarvis seized her, and wrenches the pistol away with an oath, growling:

"It's you, is it, Irish? I'll teach you to keep me out of my own house. Come along."

With that he hauled her up on her feet and said to one of his followers:

"Hold her up and come along."

Kate was too much frightened to resist and for several minutes submitted to be dragged in the direction in which she had come, till Buck Jarvis asked her:

"Well, have ye got the key?"

"No, sur," stammered Kate. "True as I stand here, I haven't."

"Who's in the house?" asked Jarvis.

"The gentleman, sur," answered Kate; "the gentleman's in there, sur."

"Who gave you that pistol?" was the next answer, as they went along.

"He gave it to me, sur, indeed and he did."

"Hum!" muttered the ruffian. "The damed fool! Might ha' knowed better than to trust you with one. Boys, we've got him."

Then they went on to the end of the next block where they stopped, and Buck said:

"Jim Nelson, that ladder ought to be about here somewhere. You and Cronk look fur it. I'll take care of this one."

The two men went off in the darkness while Jarvis turned on Kate, his manner assuming a roughly coaxing way.

"Now look a here, Kate," he said, "you have no cause to go back on me, hev ye? I was agreeable to your sellin' all the stuff there was in that house and gittin' away. You and me oughtn'ter quarrel."

Kate, a little reassured by his manner, said:

"No, sur. I don't want to quarrel with no one, sur, av I can help it."

"Then why in blazes didn't ye let me in?" asked Buck with a growl. "All I want is the gal's cloze. You know I'm her dad, don't ye?"

"Yis, sur," faltered Kate.

"Very well," he answered more placably. "Then don't give me no more trouble. This here snoozer's a-goin' to get himself into a bad box, he is. Which way did ye come out when ye came?"

He had put the question carelessly, but Kate, now that it had come to a match of wits, could lie herself out of any common scrape, so she said boldly:

"Out of the front door, sur, and I was goin' to me cousin Mike Fitzgerald, that lives over on the rocks beyant, sur."

"Ye was, was ye?"

"Yis, sur."

"Then what made ye carry a pistol?"

"For fear of the O'Gradys, sur," said Kate promptly. "The Fitzgeralds and the O'Gradys has a foight, sur, and I was feared ye gentlemen was them."

"The blazes you say? Well then, you don't object to coming back to the house and telling this young snoozer ye want to come in?"

Kate hesitated.

"Yis, sur; that is—"

"Well, what?"

"I'm afraid he w'u'dn't let me in, sur."

"Why not?"

"He tould me not to come back, sur."

"We'll risk that. You call to him and get him to let us in."

Kate saw that he meant what he said, so she took refuge in another lie.

"Plaze, sur, I'm not sure if the gentleman's there at all, sur."

Jarvis started, and his voice had a tone of joyful excitement as he asked.

"Why not? Are you sure?"

"I think, sur—"

And Kate rapped out her next lie with the ease of long practice.

"He tould me, sur, he'd go to the station to get some cops to guard the house."

Buck rapped out an oath.

"He did; did he? We'll cop him!"

With that he whistled shrilly, and the whistle was answered by Jim Nelson's voice, a little way off, saying:

"Don't get in a cast-iron sweat, Buck. Here we come, ladder and all."

Two figures appeared, carrying a ladder, and Buck led the way to the house, whispering to his confederates as he went.

When they got to the front of the house, the two men began to rear up the ladder, and Jim Nelson whispered:

"Look out, boys. He's a bad man to meet in the dark. Let it up quietly."

"He ain't there, I tell ye," whispered back Jarvis. "Keep still, so the neighbors won't hear ye."

Then Kate saw the ladder go up to one of the front windows, and one of the men, the short, stout one, named Cronk, took his way up the rounds, and tried the window.

Then he whispered down:

"It's bolted, and there's a bar across."

"Smash it in, then," whispered back Buck.

"All in, we've got him."

As he spoke, he shoved Kate to the ladder, and said, sternly:

"Git up, Irish."

Kate hesitated, and trembled.

"Pl'ase, sur, I dassn't."

"Why not?"

"I never wint up a ladder in me life, sur."

"Go up, you Cronk, and come down to open the door to us," said Buck, who did not want to have any more delay than he could help.

"Ay, ay," answered Cronk, and up the ladder he went, and they heard his and Nelson's steps inside the house, coming down-stairs.

The men seemed to be using very little, if any caution, and they came down and opened the street door, as if they belonged to the house, when Buck Jarvis, still keeping tight hold of Kate's arm, hurried her in, and said to Cronk, with some anxiety:

"Go and take down the ladder. Some one might pass, and we've got to hurry."

Then he ran in his prisoner, and said to her, with a fierce shake:

"Now, I've got ye, darn ye. Where's the box?"

"What box, sur?" asked Kate, quaking.

"The tin box, curse ye. You know well the box I mean, ye Irish skunk."

"Indade, and I don't sur," replied Kate, all in a tremor, and lying desperately to cover her tracks. "Sorra one o' me iver saw any tin box, sur, 'cept the bread-box."

Buck gave her another fierce shake, and dragged her into the back room, where he clutched her by the hair with one hand, and began to feel in his pocket with the other, muttering:

"Darn your skin, I'll teach you to lie to me! You know well enough what box I mean. You've seen it many a time."

Then he called out to Nelson:

"Strike a light, curse ye. I want to see this woman's face."

The burglar drew a match from his pocket instantly, and struck a light, when Kate, to her intense horror, saw that Buck Jarvis was opening with his teeth a large clasp-knife, which he presently brandished before her eyes, drawing her head close by the hair, and hissing out:

"Now, darn ye, will ye tell, or shall I gouge your eye out?"

Kate uttered a faint scream in her terror and instantly received a blow on the mouth that would have floored the poor creature had not Buck held her up by the hair.

"Scream, will ye!" growled the ruffian, as his confederate coolly lighted a lamp. "You give another sich a screech and I'll end ye right here and now, darn ye."

And he looked so capable of fulfilling his threat that Kate, who was easily cowed by violence, now that she could see his ferocious face, broke down and begged:

"Oh, for the Lord's sake, don't kill me, sur. I'm not fit to die yet."

"Ye ain't, ain't ye?" growled Buck, his face assuming a look of savage glee that told how the information pleased him. "I should say not. Ye want to go to hell with a lie on your lips, do ye? And have the devils turnin' ye over on the fire, do ye. Well, that's jest what I want. Tell me where that box is or I stop you and your screamin' darned quick. Come, will ye tell, darn ye?"

As he spoke, he drew her head back and put the point of the knife to her throat, so as to prick her, his teeth set, his eyes glaring down on the unhappy creature.

Was she to blame that she cried in despair:

"Don't kill me and I'll tell ye all, sur."

"Where's the box, then?" was his only answer.

"In the ash-bin, sur."

Buck withdrew the knife from her throat and yanked her up by the hair.

"Where's the ash-bin?" he asked.

"In the cellar, sur."

"And who put the box there?"

"The—the gentleman, sur."

"Come and show me the place, and mind me, if you've lied to me, I'll leave you in the cellar a dead woman, for the rats to eat."

He hauled her down-stairs to the cellar and she took him straight to the ash-bin, but he saw from a trail of ashes on the floor that something had been very recently put there or taken out, so that, as he came to the ash-bin, he let go her hair and said eagerly:

"Dump it all out. Come, help."

Nelson, who seemed to have a complete understanding with his chief, had followed with the light, and in another moment the big box of ashes was dumped on the cellar floor, with a resultant cloud of fine dust that filled the cellar and made vision and breathing difficult for awhile.

But Buck Jarvis, heeding nothing but the object of his desires, began to poke about and rummage in the ashes with a stick, till he suddenly turned round on Kate, his face more ferocious than ever, roaring:

"Fooled me, did ye? Take that!"

And so discharged a blow at her which would have stunned her but she shrunk to one side, ejaculating:

"Don't, sur, don't! Before God, he put it there, and we dumped the ashes on it. Oh, for the love of God, sur, don't kill me, don't."

She was in a perfect frenzy of terror, and rushed close to him, clinging to his knees and keeping on her wail.

"For the love o' God don't kill me, sur. It's

the gentleman has taken it, sur. Indade it was here. I rut it here myself—"

"Hallo!" here came a hoarse whisper from the head of the cellar stair. "Haloo, Buck! The back door's open and the snoozer's gone for the cops, I reckon. We'd better get up and dust outer this."

It was the voice of their confederate, Cronk, and Buck Jarvis, with an oath of bitter fury and malignity dealt the unfortunate Kate a brutal kick and rushed up the cellar steps to reconnoiter.

As the three burglars came out they turned and bolted the cellar door behind them and then went to the front door to listen.

"Did ye hear anything, that ye called?" said Buck, in a whisper, as they peered out into the darkness.

"Yes," whispered back Cronk, "it was a cop's club. Never heard it afore, down this way. Suthin's up, I reckon."

They peered out and listened more intently than ever, but no sound came to their ears like that of a policeman's club.

Indeed, the idea of a single policeman venturing out on a dark night in the vicinity of Murderer's Row was one that seldom entered the mind of the captain of that precinct, who was generally known as "Sleepy Jones" from the slack way in which he ran his district.

Presently, however, Cronk pulled Buck's sleeve.

"There it is again," he whispered.

The sharp sound of a locust club ringing on the sidewalk came indeed to their ears, close by, and in another instant all three were back in the house, closing the door softly, while Buck whispered:

"It's a new man; it must be, boys. Let him go by. The Old Holler Gang will give him all he wants."

"I'll spot the snoozer," muttered Nelson, and he stole down-stairs to the basement door, and in another moment was crouching by the steps, slung-shot in hand, awaiting the approach of the policeman.

Buck also stole down beside him, whispering:

"What'd we best do, Nelse?"

"Lay him out, of course," was the answer.

"Here he comes. I hear his steps."

Very soon the slow regular steps of a man on his beat could be heard approaching the house, and the two burglars prepared for a spring as soon as their victim came within reach of their weapons.

Slowly the steps advanced on the pavement and then of a sudden they ceased while the duller footfalls showed that the man had crossed the street to the other side.

"Let him go," whispered Nelson. "Battle Row will fix him, you bet."

"Battle Row" was the name given by the men of the neighborhood to what the police knew as "Murderer's Row." There is a good deal in a nice name, and a thief does not like to be called a thief.

Presently, as they listened, they heard the sound of the club again, exactly opposite the house, and Buck whispered:

"By posh! the feller's callin' up the rest."

"Rap! Rap! Rap!"

They all knew it well, the signal for help, and in that still night it could be heard a long way off. Almost instantly the sound was answered by responsive raps, far away beyond Murderer's Row, beyond the domain of the Fitzgeralds and O'Gradys, till the listening burglars heard more than a dozen raps.

But the steps of the man opposite the house had ceased entirely, and they judged he must be watching the place, though for what, no one could tell.

"Let's go over and double bank him," whispered Cronk. "If he goes on, he'll bring a whole lot of 'em down on a raid."

Buck nodded, and the three men crept to the area gate and made a sudden dash across the road to the place from whence the sound of the club had proceeded in the darkness.

They rushed across and nearly tumbled into the gutter in their haste; but when they reached the sidewalk and hunted round for the supposed policeman, no one was there.

Buck rushed one way, Cronk the other, and Nelson explored a third direction and fell down a steep bank into a sunken lot.

But neither sight nor sound betrayed the man who had sounded the club, till they heard it again on the opposite sidewalk, some little way up the street in the well-known call for help, instantly answered from a dozen quarters near by.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SPIRIT RAP.

"THEY'RE a-comin' in," whispered Nelson. "There's more'n a dozen of 'em. What'n blazes has brought 'em, I wonder?"

"It's a raid, sure," said Cronk, hurriedly. "Skip, culies. It's time we were outer this."

They stole across the street into the open lots in the direction of Murderer's Row, and very soon after heard footsteps ahead, as if more than one or two men were walking together toward them.

As if by one consent, all three

the ground in silence, so as to bring the sky-line before them, but could see nothing.

Heavy clouds covered the heavens; there was no moon; and it was hard to tell where the ground ended and sky began.

For all that, however, as they strained their eyes through the gloom they caught the outline of four figures marching close together, and Cronk pressed Buck's arm.

"Cops," he whispered.

Then they lay still and presently saw the four policemen halt, when one said:

"It was here I heard it."

"No. It was further on," said a second.

"Sh!" said a third. "Listen a bit."

The four men stood stock-still listening, and at last one suggested:

"Let's give a rap. Mebbe he'll answer."

"Sh!" said the other again. "It's a plant, I reckon. Keep close, boys. Those Murderer's Row fellows are bad to meet of a dark night. Don't rap."

Again all listened intently, and presently one of the policemen said in a low tone:

"It's a plant. I knowed it was. We've got to get out of this. Keep your barkers ready."

As he spoke they heard the sound of voices down in the direction of Murderer's Row, many voices talking together, with the sound of running footsteps, and the four policemen instantly faced round, while Buck heard the clicking of pistol-locks.

The Murderer's Row gang had been roused by the unusual sound of clubs in their near neighborhood and had come out to see what was the matter.

"Get into the road and halt 'em as they come up," said one policeman, who seemed to be in some sort of authority over the rest, and the quartette filed into the street and stood there as the ruffians came running up, cursing as they came to intimidate their foes.

Buck Jarvis laid his hand on Cronk's arm and touched Nelson.

"Give 'em blazes!" he whispered, and the faint clicking of their revolvers told the tale of what they intended to do.

A moment later down came the men and a clear voice sung out:

"Halt!"

They stopped as if by magic and began to mutter to each other running to and fro, with an air of hungry expectation that boded ill for the four men in the road.

"Halt and go back!" called out the man in the road. "We're on duty and will shoot if you try to come nearer. Get back, men, if you value your lives."

"We don't, curse ye! Take that!" growled a voice in the crowd.

Then came a dull thud, and one of the policemen fell, firing his pistol.

In another minute a wild, confused fray had begun, pistols flashing, oaths and blows distinctly audible in the darkness, and Buck Jarvis and his friends rushed in, yelling as they went the battle-cry of Murderer's Row.

"Hey, Crooks! Sock it to 'em!"

The contest was too unequal to last.

The four policemen fought desperately, but in two minutes' time one was down, and being fast kicked and pounded to death; the other three were running for their lives toward the high rocks, while their foes were running after them, including Buck Jarvis and his friends, set on killing the last man, if possible, to bush up the affair.

One poor fellow was overtaken at the foot of the rocks and stunned by a stone at the back of the head, when the gang set on him and trampled him into insensibility, or, as they thought, unto death.

The other two fled on toward the gas-lights on the avenue, pursued by a yelling crowd; while the Fitzgeralds and O'Gradys looked down from their rocky homes in wonder and not a little delight, shouting:

"Give it to 'em, b'yess; give it to 'em!"

Several stones struck them as they ran; but they gained the sidewalk at last, and their pursuers were going after them, when a cry rose in the rear:

"Hi! more cops! Back—back!"

They all turned to listen for a moment, and the loud "rap! rap!" of another policeman's club sounded back in Murderer's Row, as if a man were calling for help.

"It's a stall!" yelled Buck Jarvis. "They're a pullin' the place. Hey, Crooks, sock it to 'em!"

Then away they ran back toward Murderer's Row as hard as they could tear, expecting to find it full of their enemies.

The nearer they came the louder and more frequent sounded the raps, while women were screaming and jabbering excitedly in the precincts of Murderer's Row.

When they got to their houses all the women were on the doorsteps, calling to each other; but not a dark-lantern could be seen, nor was a policeman visible, while the raps had entirely ceased.

"What is it? Where are they?" shouted Cronk to one woman, who stood on her doorstep shading a kerosene lamp with her hand.

"How the blazes do I know?" she retorted,

with the amiable manner of her class. "You're a blank of a crook, you are, to be axin' where the cops is, and they a-rappin' all round us."

"Over there!" screamed another woman, and she pointed out to the vacant lots opposite. "That's the last place we heerd 'em."

In the direction indicated rushed the inmates of Murderer's Row; for it was essential to their safety to terrify the police, and they had too long enjoyed the immunity that comes from strength to give it up in a hurry.

But search as they might, no one was found in the empty lots; and while they were hard at it there, another rap echoed from the foot of the rocks of Shantytown, and started them off in that direction.

But Buck Jarvis now, for the first time, began to hang back, and said to Cronk:

"There's some plant about this. Some one's fooling us with his raps. There ain't no cops here, and won't be none till mornin'. You come with me."

And he took his comrades to the house which they had entered before, and tried to re-enter. To his surprise the doors were fast bolted, and the ladder with which he had entered lay in front of the house disabled.

Some one had sawed it in half at the middle, and then broken rung after rung, so that the machine was absolutely useless for scaling the windows.

Buck swore venomously when he saw it, and told Cronk:

"It's the very snoozer we're after. Curse him! He's inside now, and he's the man that's b'en foolin' us with these raps. Call the boys up, and we'll go for him."

Cronk ran off willingly enough, while Buck, leaving Nelson to guard the front of the house went to the back, pistol in hand, and found the back garden door standing open.

He bolted in, only to break his shins over a concealed wire, and fall on his face into a tub about half full of broken glass, on which he cut his bands and nose badly, and nearly put out one eye.

Picking himself off the ruins, he went to the back door, resolved on vengeance, and found it fast locked and bolted.

"Aha!" muttered Buck savagely. "You're a smart snoozer, but jest one too smart for your own good. Ef you're in there, we've got you, I reckon."

He heard the footsteps of the returning men of Murderer's Row and very soon they had surrounded the house, back and front, and were trying the doors and windows.

They found all so firmly fastened that they had to bring an "Alderman" to pry open the back door, but the said "Alderman" did his duty so effectually that within three minutes after he was put to work they saw the basement passage open.

The "Alderman" had "cracked his crib" in the true scientific style, being a compound between a sharp pointed chisel and a crowbar of very fine steel, made with joints so as to give him an immense leverage when applied to a small crack.

Buck Jarvis and his friends dashed into the house without any effort at concealment, and ransacked it from top to bottom.

They lighted all the lamps and explored it from garret to cellar, without finding a trace of any human being there.

Kate O'Donnell had spirited herself away or been carried off, and some one had taken a few articles of clothing in a hurry, but the birds had flown, and the question was, what had become of them?

Buck Jarvis, with a sober, anxious face, headed the search and poked into every hole and corner, as if hunting for something that he knew well.

Whatever it was, he did not find it, and was cursing viciously to himself, when he heard a murmur among the men, and they began to run outside and call to each other.

"What is it?" he asked one as he followed.

"It's that infernal ghost a-rappin' again," answered the man, not without a slight tremor in his voice. "Let's get outer this."

Out they went on the sidewalk again, and soon heard the same "rap! rap! rap!" of a club on the sidewalk, answered by another from a little distance off.

One sound came from near the rock shanties, the other from near Murderer's Row, and the thieves and desperadoes of the gang were beginning to be demoralized.

Men who were ready to dare the gallows or State Prison at any time of night, were just beginning to tremble under the influence of an empty noise they could not explain.

As for Buck Jarvis he beckoned to Nelson, and they stole off across the lots silently.

As soon as they were out of sight in the darkness he whispered:

"Keep still. I'll ketch that snoozer yet. He's a hidin' somewhere to fool us all."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MYSTERY DEEPENS.

WHEN Harvey ran away from the house where Nina Somers had lived, with the tin box of papers in his hand, his first idea was to make

for the police station, and he darted across the lots in that direction.

He had not gone a hundred yards, however, before he heard voices near him, and he instantly stopped and threw himself on the ground to listen.

Pretty soon the voices became plainer.

"What's up, cully?"

"Darned if I know. Look out for a s'iff. It was round here the shot was fired, and I heard a woman screech."

"Who's out to-night?"

"None of the reg'lars. It's only Nelse and Cronk went to oblige Buck Jarvis."

"Buck be hanged. He ain't a reg'lar crook."

"He's a good man to know, fur all that, cully."

"A good skin, ye mean."

"Waal, if he's a skin, it's 'cause he's got to be."

"Why got to be?"

"Cause he's got to be in with the cops, and that costs a pile, you bet. Buck's the safest fence in the country, and if he wants a crib cracked none of us won't say no."

Harvey listened and looked to see the forms of the robbers if he could, but nothing yet crossed the faint sky-line.

Presently said one:

"It's a darned queer job he's on to-night; so he told Nelse."

"What is it?"

"Crackin' this 'ere crib right near home. It ain't worth usin' a jimmy on it. There ain't nothin' in them cribs, not so much as a spoon that ain't sham stuff."

"That's his biz, I reckon," said the other, and then Harvey saw them at last, coming to the place where he lay as directly as if they had seen him, two men with their hands in their pockets.

Harvey grasped the slung-shot, which he had taken from Nelson, firmly in his hand and slowly drew up his legs for a spring.

The men came on toward him, when they heard a woman's scream from one of the houses and both stopped and looked that way.

"Another racket," said one. "What's the use of skeerin' women when there ain't nothin' to be got for it?"

And then came the sound that had startled the burglars in the house and which equally startled Harvey and the men outside.

The rap of the police club on a hard stone not three hundred yards off.

Both men in the waste lots started and swore violently.

"A cop, by gum!"

"Sock it to him!"

And they instantly set off at a run in the direction of the rap, when one tripped over the tin box by which Harvey lay, and fell at full length on the young man's legs.

In a moment Harvey was sitting up, and in another moment the dull thud of the "neddy" on the man's head showed him he had one enemy the less.

He threw off the body and scrambled to his feet, when the other man, who had at first been too paralyzed to understand what was going on, seeing a foe springing out of the ground, recovered himself with marvelous quickness and rushed at him to close, striking as he came.

In vain Harvey tried to parry the blow.

It met his own weapon, and curling over it, disabled his wrist.

The next moment the man of Murderer's Row closed in and was plying his "neddy" with the skill of an old fighter, so that his second and third blows took Harvey on the head, and the young man dropped on the earth like a slaughtered ox and lay still.

Then his antagonist muttered:

"Cooked your goose, anyway. Now for you, Mr. Cop."

And he stole softly off toward the spot whence the club rap had come, only to find, when he got there, no one on the sidewalk or anywhere around.

The rough listened attentively and said to himself doubtfully:

"Queer! darned queer!"

He threw himself on the ground to listen and peer round, when presently came the rap again down by the houses where he knew Buck Jarvis was committing a burglary, and the rap was almost instantly answered from somewhere beyond Murderer's Row.

"By gosh, that's queer," muttered the rough, whose name was Isaac Sharpley, better known as Slugger Ike, from his habits of hard hitting. He set off slowly and stealthily, skirting the street till he heard the rush of the three burglars and the approach of the unwary policemen.

In the subsequent struggle and chase of the ill-fated men who had dared Murderer's Row in the night, Slugger Ike took his part, but when it was all over and again he heard the mysterious rap down in Murderer's Row he thought himself of the man whom he had slugged so neatly, and went back to find the body of Harvey.

When he got there the young man was gone, and his friend Limber Joe, who had been with him, was beginning to wake up from the swoon

into which Harvey's blow had thrown him, showing that the Slugger's work had not been done so effectively or neatly as that of the unknown person, whoever he was and wherever he might be.

"What's the matter, Limber, and why in blazes didn't ye lay out that feller?" asked the rough as his friend groaned.

"Lay out Old Scratch," muttered Limber Joe. "I feel as if I'd be'n through a rollin'-mill, all squeezed flat."

" Didn't ye see him?"

" See Old Nick! I tell ye I've jest woked up."

" Well, I laid out the man that laid out you, and he's gone," said Slugger. " What was that you fell over when he slugged you?"

" I d'no," responded Limber Joe, slowly rising. " It felt like a darned coal-scuttle, and my shins are all cut to blazes. My head's goin' round like a mill, Slugger."

" Ketch a-holder me and come on," was the reply, and the two men set off for Murderer's Row, where the buzz of voices still told of the great excitement that reigned among its inmates.

Presently, as they went along, they heard the mysterious raps far away to the right, and Ike said to his friend:

" Here, hurry up and get home. I'm goin' to find what's the matter here to-night. Darned if I don't, somehow."

So saying, he stole away alone in the direction from which the sounds had come and was soon lost to sight, while Limber Joe stumbled on his own homeward way, muttering:

" I've had enough. I ain't no hog, I ain't."

Slugger took his way onward, and just as he thought he had reached the place whence the raps had proceeded, he heard them again, this time in the opposite direction.

The rough was a man of nerve, but even he began to shake a little, as much from utter bewilderment as from fear.

" Where in blazes is it?" he cried aloud, and with that he thought he heard a laugh near him, that sounded unearthly and hollow, though it came from above his head.

" Who are you?" cried the rough facing round toward the sound, and laying his hand on his pistol at once.

There was no answer, and a dead silence reigned around him.

His way had brought him to the sunken and swampy lots that lie away to the northwest of the Central Park, that are going to become rows of palaces, some day, and that in the mean time resemble pits, surrounded by embankments which are streets, and divided in the middle by rows of tall brick or tile cylinders that look like chimneys, and are really sewer pipes to the level of where the street will be some day.

A desolate scene, and the tall sewer pipes gave a ghostly look to it, that dark night; just as the distant mutter of thunder showed that a storm was coming on.

Slugger Ike shuddered slightly, and it took a good deal of resolution for him to stand still and listen to those ghostly raps, all alone. He managed to do it, however, for a space of nearly ten minutes during which he had the pleasure of bearing the mysterious raps no less than five times, each one in a different place, as if the ghostly rappers were in the habit of taking a walk to amuse himself, like an idle boy.

But listen as he would, he would gain no clew to the nature of the noise, and after a fruitless watch of an hour, during which he heard the raps coming all round him, he began to realize from the silence elsewhere that the denizens of Murderer's Row had given up the chase in despair, and gone home to their houses.

Then Slugger began to bethink himself that he was all alone, and a thrill of feeling very like superstition crept over him.

Softly he stole away toward Murderer's Row, and had gone about half the distance when:

" Rap! rap! rap!"

The sounds came again from the very place he had just left, and almost immediately after he saw three men coming stealthily to meet him, half crouching.

" There's the snoozer! Sock it to him!" cried the voice of Buck Jarvis, and in a moment Slugger Ike was fighting for his life and yelling as he fought:

" Hold on, ye darned galoots! Don't ye know me? I'm Slugger Ike. Darn ye, take that."

And so saying the Slugger knocked down Mr. Cronk, and was floored in his turn by Buck Jarvis and Nelson, who thought they had found Harvey for certain, the Slugger being about the same height as the stranger.

It was not till they struck a match and found the face of their old friend that they could be convinced of their mistake, and then they had to make it up as best they could by taking Ike home and "setting up" unlimited whisky for the whole of Murderer's Row, while they discussed the mystery of the night and every man offered his own explanation of the affair, ending in acknowledging that only daylight could clear it up.

Buck Jarvis and his friends departed for Brooklyn with the early dawn, and took the

opposite way to that by which they had come, by which means they were spared the mortification of finding that not one of the policemen had been killed outright.

CHAPTER XV.

THE QUEER COP.

In the mean time what had become of our friend Harvey, and how had Kate O'Donnell and himself got away from that dangerous place without the notice of the roughs?

As for Harvey, when he felt the first stinging blow of the "neddy" on the head in the dark, he knew it was all up with him as far as concerned his chances for that particular fight, and he dropped instinctively, the second blow missing half its force as he fell.

He pretended to be insensible, and in point of fact was very nearly so, though he heard Ike mutter as he bent over him:

" Cooked your goose, I reckon."

Had he moved at that moment Ike would have made things sure, but as he lay still he had the satisfaction, in his half-dazed state, of hearing the burglar go off, and he lay like one in a dream for several minutes.

He was roused from this state by a soft, prowling step near him, and saw a dark figure approaching, at which his senses came back to him, and he lay still again, having the slung-shot still in his hand.

In that vicinity he knew every one must be a foe, and his only chance of escaping death lay in making his way out before light.

The prowling figure advanced, and to his inexpressible surprise, as it passed over him, the glitter of brass buttons showed that the man wore a police uniform.

Dark, as it was, he could make out the two rows of buttons and the club in the man's hand, so that he spoke out softly:

" Help, for God's sake!"

The moment he spoke the policeman made a spring toward him with the club and aimed a vicious blow at his head, without saying a word.

Harvey instinctively raised his arm and fell back, when he lay still again, and the blow only failed to break his arm by his falling.

He expected another blow, but to his surprise and joy none came, and the policeman, in a queer, chuckling way, muttered:

" Ho! ho! Ho! ho! Another gone! Another to pay for what I got!"

Harvey, not knowing what to make of it all, saw him go prowling round again, and presently Limber Joe, who was coming to, gave a groan and stirred.

Instantly the mysterious policeman sprung toward the man, clutched him by the collar, pulled him half up and dealt him another blow on the head, muttering:

" Will ye be still? Will ye?"

Under this treatment Limber Joe lay as still as a mouse, being completely stunned once more, and the policeman chuckled again, saying, audibly:

" Ho! ho! Ho! ho! Another to pay for what I got!"

Harvey, bruised and battered as he was, could see all this, and could not help an idea that this policeman must be drunk or crazy.

He saw the man go prowling round again, and presently came to the tin box, which still lay by Limber Joe's body.

Harvey saw him pick it up, feel it all over, and then heard him chuckle again:

" Ho! ho! Ho! ho! Reward; reward! Let 'em hunt! Let 'em hunt! Good for me!"

Then he took the box by the handle and stole away in the dark as noiselessly as he had come, while Harvey, convinced that his only safety lay in getting out of that place as fast as possible, crawled away to a little distance and was about to rise when he heard the beginning of the short battle between the four policemen and the gang from Murderer's Row, ending in chasing the poor fellows to the rock shanties of the O'Gradys.

Harvey lay still, till they had passed, and then instinctively ran back to the house from which he had come, with a vague idea of asking help and shelter from one of the neighbors, or hiding himself away in a cellar till morning.

He staggered on, for he had hardly yet got back his senses, when he was startled by the faint groan of a man close by him, and came on one of the policemen who had been shot down and left for dead in the first fight, and who now called out:

" Help, for God's sake! help! Water!"

Harvey went to him and found him lying close to Nina Somers's house.

He was a young man, stout and well-built, and had been shot through the breast, so that he was as weak as a rat, while his head had been brutally battered, so that he had been left for dead.

Harvey stooped down and tried to lift him, saying as he did so:

" If you can walk, I can get you into this house to lie down."

" I'll—I'll try," said the poor fellow faintly, and with that Harvey lifted him up and made

shift to support him into the house, the basement door of which stood wide open as it had been left by the burglars when they first darted out after the policemen.

Harvey helped in the poor man, who managed to say as he sunk on a sofa:

" Shut—but all the doors and windows. They'll come back. Give—give 'em a fight for it. My pistol—take it."

His pistol had been emptied in the fight, but he had clung to it in the darkness.

Harvey took the weapon and did as the wounded man advised, when as he passed the cellar door he heard the voice of Kate whisper:

" Oh, for the love o' God, whoever ye are, let a poor girl out!"

Harvey recognized the voice and hastily undid the door, when Kate O'Donnell came out, and on discovering who was her deliverer, gave vent to sundry ejaculations of praise.

A little questioning elicited from her the way in which she had been captured, and she did her best to assist him in barring up the house and disabling the ladder.

Then came the problem of how to escape, for they knew it could not be long before the men of Murderer's Row would be back, and force their way into the house, when the wounded policeman, if no one else, was certain to be killed by the infuriated roughs.

It was Kate's wit that got them out of the dilemma, and it was very simply arranged.

Every one dwelling in that forlorn row was poor and respectable, and Kate knew the people next door, who agreed to take the fugitives in and hide them.

The wounded policeman was first disposed of, then Kate followed, and finally Harvey locked and barred the house inside, made his own escape through the scuttle, and was quietly ensconced in the next house, while the roughs of Murderer's Row were ransacking Nina's effects next door.

The people of the house were very nervous about it, but experienced great relief when Murderer's Row finally settled down to its usual nightly spree, and about an hour before the dawn Harvey stole out, found everything quiet, and managed to make his way to the police station, where he reported what had happened to the sergeant in charge.

This sergeant happened to be a sharp and energetic man, a great contrast to his sleepy captain, but as soon as he heard the story of a wounded policeman he said:

" That's none from our precinct. We don't risk our men there at night."

" One of your men was there," declared Harvey; " for we heard him rapping in all directions all night long, and I saw him."

" What sort of a looking man was he?" the sergeant asked, and Harvey gave him a short account of the way in which the unknown policeman had clubbed him and carried off the tin-box of papers belonging to Nina Somers.

" It's of the greatest importance we should get those papers back," pursued Harvey. " The man had no right to carry them off."

" Hold on," interrupted the sergeant. " Yes he had, if he was on duty. He has probably taken them to his captain for examination. You know that place is partly in our precinct and partly in Captain Samuels's jurisdiction. Samuels is a new man and ambitious. It must have been his men that got into that muss last night. He'll likely call on us to make a raid there to-night. I don't quite understand it all. You'd better go to him if you want to get back your box."

Harvey was pretty well bruised up from his experience of the night before, but he could think of nothing but the box of which he had been so mysteriously deprived.

He took a car to Captain Samuels's station, and found a young, stern-looking man in authority there, to whom he told his story again, with a different result.

Captain Samuels questioned him closely and then took him to an inner room, where lay three men, one of them battered and bruised almost beyond recognition, the others considerably damaged but sensible.

" Do you recognize any of them as the man who assaulted you?" he asked.

Harvey looked narrowly at them and shook his head doubtfully.

" No," he said. " It was rather a small man, and he wore a full beard. He walked so softly that I looked at his feet and found he was barefooted."

Captain Samuels sneered slightly.

" I thought so. He wasn't one of my men. It must have been one of their tricks, down in Murderer's Row, to entice my men in there and double-bank them. But I'll be even with them. They've not got sleepy old Jones to deal with this time. They've taken four of my best men, and they'll pay for it before long, or my name's not Samuels."

" And no one brought the box here?" asked Harvey doubtfully.

" No. You'll never see that again, unless you advertise a reward. It's my impression that your man, Buck Jarvis, has it. He's a wary old coon, and the force have been looking for evidence against him any time this three years."

Now we've got him. You say you recognized his face, and that he broke into the house."

"No, no," said Harvey hurriedly. "I didn't see it then. It was where his friends set on me I saw him, but I suspected it was he. Stay, the girl Kate O'Donnell, she'll be able to swear to him."

"We'll bring her here then," said Samuels, "and we'll go for my man at once. We'll see if this Murderer's Row Gang will face us in daylight, confound 'em!"

A whole platoon of police was ordered out, and made the descent on Murderer's Row at once, with the result of finding no one there but women and children, the men having taken themselves off before dawn, in anticipation of what was coming.

The wounded policeman was taken away in an ambulance, and every house in the row was searched without result for the tin box, while the stern-looking captain questioned and cross-questioned all the women and found nothing for his pains but the story of the raps which had confused every one so much, the night before.

No excuse could be found for arresting any one on suspicion; for even the wounded man could identify none of his assailants and Kate O'Donnell, much to Harvey's surprise, had suddenly turned noncommittal to the last degree, and pretended not to know who had assailed her the night before.

She swore she had never told Harvey a word about Buck Jarvis, and so irritated the young man by her denials, that he broke out on her when the captain left the room:

"You're betraying us, Kate. You're betraying Miss Nina. Do you want her to get into that man's power again? We can't arrest him without your evidence, and as long as he's abroad your young mistress is in danger."

Kate hung her head, and looked sulky; but did not answer till he asked:

"Why wouldn't you tell the truth, Kate?"

The woman looked up at him.

"And is it meself wants to disgrace Miss Nina by bringing her into court before them all, as that villain's daughter? Ye're no friend of hers, av ye do it, sur."

Harvey was struck by her words. He had been thinking only of arresting Jarvis, and thus ridding Nina of her persecution, but it was certain that Kate was right.

To arrest Jarvis was to bring out before the reporters—who could tell what depths of family scandal—and the young man was by no means certain what would be the result of it.

"You're right, Kate," he said, with penitence, "and I was wrong. It's lucky Miss Nina is out of his power. Will you come with me, and see her?"

"And that I will," said Kate, more cheerfully, "and bad luck to the day we ever came to that unlucky house, sur, and bad luck to the thief that stole the tin box. Oh, mister, wull we ever see it again? 'Twas the ould mistress herself tould me 'twas all that Miss Nina had in the world between her and the poor-house, and ay we don't find it, what'll become of her at all, at all?"

Harvey clinched his teeth.

"I'll find it, if I die for it," he said.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GOVERNMENT BONDS.

"WELL," said Captain Samuels to Harvey, a little while after Kate had spoken. "This girl won't say anything about the burglary, so we'll have to go on the assault. I'll give you a man to go over to Brooklyn after this Jarvis, if you like."

Harvey shrugged his shoulders.

"He never assaulted me. It was his friend, Jim Nelson, and I gave him all he wanted. I don't want to make a complaint."

Samuels stared, and then observed in a voice of great ill-temper:

"You're as bad as the woman. It's the first time we've had a square chance at this Buck Jarvis, and now you're backing out. All right. Next time, don't come to me for help, with your cock-and-bull stories about ghosts in uniform with clubs. Hoe your own row."

And Samuels departed in a huff, while Harvey betook himself to the cars, and went over to Brooklyn with Kate, to see his old friend, Colonel Olaf Svenson, the fencing-master.

He found the colonel in his academy, giving a lesson to two very clumsy young men, who were learning to spar, and the colonel merely nodded to him, saying:

"De senora is up-stairs. De senorita is well. You go to see her, ha! Excuse me till dis lesson is over. Mr. Brown, go on. Now! Lead at me! Quick, quick! Parry, and return! Take care of dat head! Ah, you are too slow! Quicker! One, two! one, two! Better!"

Harvey did not take much interest in the lesson, so he took Kate to the upper part of the house, the honest woman seeming to be deeply mystified by all she saw, especially the trophies of weapons that hung everywhere there was a place for them.

"Mr. Harvey," she whispered at last. "Mr. Harvey, whisper, sur?"

"Well, Kate?" he answered.

"Is it a barracks here, sur?" she asked, with wide-open eyes.

"A what, Kate?"

"A barracks, sur."

"What's a barracks, Kate?"

"Where the soldiers lives, sur."

"Oh! a barrack, you mean?"

"Yes, sur. Is it a barracks?"

"No. Why do you ask?"

"Sure, I saw all the swords and bay'nets, sur; and the ould man down stairs—isn't he a general, or a sergeant, or something?"

Harvey laughed.

"No; only a colonel. He's a fencing-mas-

ter."

"And what's that, sur?"

"He teaches people how to fight."

"And is he teachin' Miss Nina, sur?"

Harvey couldn't help another laugh.

"No, no. Miss Nina is with the colonel's mother, a Spanish lady, up stairs."

Kate looked disappointed.

"Sure it w'u'd be a noise thing av he'd tache Miss Nina how to fight that baste of a Jarvis whin he comes asther her."

"But ladies never fight, Kate. It's a man's business to take care of them."

"But they don't do it all the time, sur."

Their conversation took place on the stair, and was interrupted, the senora putting her head out of the room, and asking:

"Who is dat? Ah, Senor 'Arvia, it eez you! De senorita is betteir. Come in."

When she saw Kate, she seemed at once to understand what was going on, for she said, animatedly:

"Dat is raight. Dat is de Kate she talk of all de time. Come in—come in."

The next moment Kate uttered a scream of joy, as she caught sight of her young mistress through the open door; and the faithful creature rushed in, threw herself on her knees by Nina, and began to rock to and fro with the girl in her arms, sobbing:

"Ochone, Miss Nina—ochone! Wirastru! We won't never see her no more. She's gone to the holy saints! Ochone, ochone!"

And so, with her impulsive wailing, set Nina to crying, too, though she had been quiet before, till the old senora came and took her away with gentle force, saying:

"Dere, dere, my girl, dat is enough. You make de senorita seek, you go on. You moss be quiet—quiet."

Kate was docile enough, and submitted to be taken away, when Nina dried her eyes hurriedly, saying to Harvey:

"Forgive me. I am better to-day, and oh! so thankful to you."

"There is no need of that," he returned, rather sadly. "I have not done much for you."

She glanced keenly at him, and noticed that he had been hurt.

His face had not been injured, but it was very pale, and he kept his right arm in the breast of his coat, for it had very nearly been broken the night before.

She turned pale and trembled:

"You have been hurt—and for me?"

"Not much," he returned, evasively. "But I've a great deal to tell, and more to ask."

"Ask on," she replied. "I'll tell you all now."

"Well," he said, "I went to your house—"

"Yes, and found Kate there. How good of you to bring her back with you!"

"I found her there, and Buck Jarvis at the door, trying to get in."

"Did he succeed?" asked Nina, with evident trepidation in her tone.

"No; I came up in time to stop it."

"Thank God! But it was there you were hurt, was it?"

"No, not much—that is. I beat him off, and his two friends, thanks to the colonel's lessons and my own youth."

"Ah, what a good man he is!" said she, impulsively—"so kind and generous, and so gentle. No one would imagine he could be so terrible as the senora says he can be."

"Yes, he is all you say, and he has taught me much that is useful. Well, I got Kate to let me into the house. She hesitated at first, and I don't blame her."

Nina smiled.

"Poor Kate! She's so faithful. Excuse her if she doubted you. She's so jealous for me."

"I don't blame her. Well, she let me in. And now comes the question. Do you know what was in that tin box?"

Nina changed color.

"Yes. It held all my mother's papers and the bonds she depended on for her living."

"The bonds! Government bonds?"

"Yes."

"Do you know the numbers?" he asked very anxiously. "It has been stolen, and we can probably trace it if we have a list."

Nina's face was full of doubt.

"No, I don't know. Mother always kept the list separate, and hid it away."

"Do you know where?"

She thought a moment.

"I think I do."

"And where was it?"

"In our bedroom under the carpet, in the corner behind the bureau."

"Is there anything else there?"

"No. It is a large paper in an envelope. It is a list of all the papers in the box."

Harvey instantly took his hat.

"I'll go and get it. That's a clew. If the robbers try to sell the bonds we can trace them."

He was leaving the room, when she said:

"Don't go yet. Don't risk your life for that. If it is gone, it can't be helped."

"But it contains your whole fortune," he said.

"Yes, but it was not much, I assure you," she answered with a sad smile. "Poor mother and I had to live very close. We had not much."

"Enough to make it worth saving," he retorted. "I'll go and find it somehow."

Again he was going, when she said:

"At least tell me how it was lost. You have told me nothing of what happened or of how you brought Kate here."

Thus urged, Harvey gave a rapid recital of the past night and the girl listened like one petrified to his recital of the perils through which he had passed till he came to the mysterious raps that had caused so much disturbance, when she said:

"Why, that's nothing strange."

"Nothing strange!" echoed Harvey.

"No. I used to hear him every night if I woke up about two or three. I used to listen to them screaming and yelling down in that fearful place they call Murderer's Row, and when those raps came the noise always stopped. I used to think it was so reassuring, so restful I always slept better for it."

Harvey was interested at once.

"You say you've heard these raps before?" he asked. "Why, I understood that the police never ventured there after dark."

Nina shuddered slightly.

"No more they did. It was a dreadful place to live in at night, but they never hurt us. Every one in that row was so poor. No one knew we had any money, or I suppose we should have been robbed. Mother used to tell me it was the safest place for us. No one would ever think of looking for us there."

"But the raps? You say you heard them often?"

"Yes, almost every night, but generally when all was quiet."

"And did you hear nothing about them?"

"How? I don't understand."

"I mean, about the man who made them. He must have been a bold fellow to come into that neighborhood at night, and sound a challenge to those ruffians."

Nina shook her head.

"I never asked. I thought it was all right. The people in our block used to call him the Spirit Walker. No one ever saw him, so far as I know."

"Well," said Harvey gravely, "wherever he is and whatever he does, he has your box."

And he proceeded to tell the story of his strange experience with the mysterious policeman who had carried off the box, and of what Captain Samuels had said about advertising the property if he hoped to get it back again.

"But what's the use of advertising?" he said, in conclusion. "If he's one of the Murderer's Row Gang, he'll want a larger reward than you can pay. How much was there in the box?"

"I don't know," she said, calmly, "but if I were you, I would advertise. He's not one of those horrid men. He was our only protection. I do believe if it had not been for him, those wretches would have robbed us all of the little we had, some night."

"If you say so I'll write," he said, "but if he does not belong to them, he certainly does not to the police. They don't go round barefooted."

"I would advertise," she said, quietly. "It can do no harm, and may do good."

"What shall I say?" he asked.

She thought a little.

"Put in, if the gentleman who has Mrs. Somers's box of papers will communicate with you, he will hear of something to his advantage. Won't that do?"

"Possibly it might. I'll try it. But suppose he comes, what am I to give him?"

"Oh, give him one of the bonds. Mother used to cut the little slips off, whenever she wanted any money."

Harvey looked doubtful.

"That is rather a vague direction. I might not stop at one bond and you might lose all that you had through me."

Nina smiled.

"I'll trust you. I know you would never deceive or rob me."

"You're very generous," answered he, with a good deal of feeling. "I'll try to deserve your confidence."

He was going away again, when she said rather timidly:

"Mr. Harvey."

"Yes."

"Do you know I think—

Then she stopped as if not knowing how to continue.

"What is it, Miss Somers? You have a question to ask."

"Yes. That is—"

"Ask anything you please. I will do my best to answer you."

"It is this. I must be thinking about—"

"About what?" he asked, as she stopped.

"About—"

She seemed to be struggling with her feelings and finally said in a low tone:

"About the funeral. My poor mother."

Harvey started.

In the rush of other incidents he had almost forgotten the body in the Morgue, and the necessity of claiming and burying it.

He knew that he could only do it by authority from Nina; and to show that, must lead to a public acknowledgment of her present residence, which he wished to keep secret from Buck Jarvis.

Nina saw his perplexity, for she said:

"Suppose that man claims—claims the poor body. He must not have it. She must be buried properly, and by me."

"That is true," he answered, gravely; "but have you reflected that if he does claim the body, as the husband, and you resist the claim, he will have a right also to claim you, as your legal guardian."

Nina shuddered slightly.

"Yes, I have thought of it. But what am I to do? She must be properly buried."

"Will you leave it to me?" he said. "I will see to it all. Trust me for another day. If the worst comes to the worst, and we have to fight him in the courts, they will never give you into the power of a man of notoriously bad character. Trust me for another day, and I will do my best."

Nina hid her face in her hands.

"Poor mother. And all this time she lies among strangers with no one to take care of her. Mr. Harvey, I must go. Take me with you; no matter what happens. I must see and claim her body."

Harvey drew himself up rather stiffly.

"If you insist on it, of course I must go," was all he answered.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE COLONEL'S PLAN.

LEAVING Nina to speak to the senora about what he thought was her rash resolution, Harvey went down-stairs to see the colonel, and found the old warrior in his white fencing jacket mounting a foil in the work-room behind the academy.

The colonel looked up and nodded.

"Vell, you find her vell, ha!"

"Yes; but she's got an idea into her head that is sure to end in harm."

"Vat is dat?"

"She wants to claim her mother's body in person and take it away."

The colonel knit his brows and pursed up his lips, saying:

"Vell, vat of dat? It is natural. De daughter should take care of her moder."

"Yes, but don't you see that we have taken her with great difficulty from the power of this villainous step father, and if she goes there she is sure to meet him?"

The colonel whistled.

"Aha! I see. He vill wait for her dere. Is dat it? I see, I see. Let me t'ink. The old man has good head yet."

He went on fuming at the mountings of the foil in silence for nearly two minutes, and finally broke out:

"I have it. I go with you. De ladee she gif us letter. She too seek to go. Ve fool dis Buck Jarvis. I manage it all. Come with me."

He led the way up to his mother's room with his rapid, impetuous step, and went in after a single sharp rap.

They found Nina already dressed for the street, while the old lady seemed to be remonstrating with her, and the colonel broke in at once:

"Vat is dis I hear, senorita? You are tired of de academie alreadee, and vant to go to dis Senor Jarvis, ha?"

Nina colored deeply.

"No, I don't say that."

"But I do say dat. You go from here, and how s'all ve keep you from dat man? He is sure to get you. We have no right to keep you here. We are not relativ. No, no. You must stay here till we find you de relativ. You haf some, ha? You tell de senora last night you haf oncle in de Fist' avenue, is it not so, de general vat you call him—Meeks? Is dat it?"

Nina seemed to be much distressed.

"Yes. General Mix, my mother's brother; but he would have nothing to say to her when she was alive. I cannot go to him."

"But vich you like best? Go to heem or to dis Jarvis?" asked the colonel sharply.

Nina looked as if she were about to cry.

"Oh, anywhere rather than to Jarvis. But my uncle would not receive me. I never saw him in my life."

"I vill see to dat," answered the colonel

promptly. "You gif us letter to take charge of de body, and ve find de general. Dat is settle. I cannot take de responsibility of letting you go tell ve haf try everyting."

So it was settled, much to Nina's real relief, and the colonel and Harvey went away to find the body of Mrs. Somers and hunt up Nina's supposed uncle, General Mix of No. — Fifth avenue.

When they were in the cars, going up-town, the colonel said to Harvey:

"Vere you go first?"

"To her house."

"Ahal Whv?"

Harvey told him of the missing list and related his adventures of the past night, to all which the veteran listened attentively.

When he had finished Svenson said:

"Dat is strange story. De man dat haf dat box is crazee."

"So I think."

"Think? I am sure. You say dat de police captain laugh at de story?"

"Yes. He evidently didn't believe me."

The colonel pursed up his lips.

"Ahal. Maybe he know somet'ing of dat man. I haf heard of him before."

"Of whom?"

"Of dis crazee man. Dey call hum de Night Walker of de Flat."

"The Night Walker? That is what she said was his name."

"Yer. I haf heard it. Stop, I know a man

vill tell us all about him."

"And who is he?"

"Uncle Joe Marks."

"Who is Uncle Joe Marks?"

"De oldest policeman on de force. He was retire, and now he keep a house in de Ninth Ward. We will go see him."

"But first to the house. I must get that list. If it has the numbers of the bonds I can advertise them. We get out at this station and walk across."

They got out and walked across the long, empty stretches of land, with the tall columns of sewer pipes intersecting the blocks.

As they neared Murderer's Row by daylight, they saw that quite a number of police were there, and the colonel observed:

"Dat captain know his business. He will break up dat gang yet."

They went to the house, for Harvey had got the key, and found a policeman watching it. He questioned them and they had to call for the roundsman before he would let them in, but they finally satisfied him of their right to enter, and went through the house, which lay in the disorder in which it had lain the night before, after the visit of the mob.

Harvey went straight to the corner Nina had told him of, pulled aside the bureau, and felt the crackle of paper under the carpet, from which he drew forth in triumph an envelope directed in a lady's hand as follows:

"NINA SOMERS JARVIS.

"List of papers, etc.

"JULY —, 18—."

The date was several years back.

Harvey eagerly opened the envelope and produced a list of several foolscap pages, which he scanned hastily till he saw:

"U. S. BONDS. NUMBERS."

There were fifty of them, not in regular order, but with no clew to the denomination of the bonds, and Harvey was perplexed, till, as he looked again, he saw a note referring to the end of the list, and found the figures and words:

"\$1,000 each."

That settled it. Nina Somers was entitled to fifty thousand dollars in U. S. Bonds, and he had the numbers with him safe.

"We can go now," he said to the colonel. "I have the facts to advertise."

They locked the house and went away in the direction of Murderer's Row.

As they passed by, Captain Svenson came up in a buggy, and when he saw the colonel nodded affably, saying:

"How are you, colonel? What are you doing about here?"

Every one knew the colonel, who nodded in reply.

"Just look around. You know de old sport go everywhere. You know dis young gentleman, fri'nd of mine? Very fine man, Mistare Harvie."

Samuels looked at Harvey askance.

"Ay, ay, I've seen him. Friend of yours?"

"Yes, sare."

"Then you'd better tell him he's a fool to try and work without us," said Samuels tartly. "We've the best chance to run down Buck Jarvis and all this gang, and he won't make a complaint."

The colonel answered soothingly:

"Samuels, my dear friend. It would not do. Dere are familee matters. A ladie in de case. Dis Jarvis he vill go to de end of bis rope all de soonair, if be t'ink ve dare not prosecute him."

"Ay, ay," returned Samuels, ill-temperedly. "I know what you mean. Give it to the private agencies. Lose all you've got. You'll never find that tin box without us."

"Can you put your hand on it?" asked Harvey, facing the police captain suddenly.

Samuels shrugged his shoulders.

"I might if I wanted to."

"Well, you'll have a chance. I'm going now to advertise a thousand dollars' reward for it. There's fifty thousand in bonds in it."

The captain brightened up.

"Make it two, and I'll engage to have it for you in a week."

The colonel pressed Harvey's arm to keep him still, answering:

"If you get it to-day, my friend, we'll say yes to dat."

"I hardly know—" began Harvey, but the colonel squeezed his arm again.

"If you get it to-night, you shall have de money. You know my place. Send it dere, and ve pay you."

"I'll do my best. Good-day!" said Samuels, hurriedly, and he drove off to the end of the block and talked earnestly to a group of men in plain clothes, while Harvey said to the colonel impatiently:

"What made you offer him so much? It is an imposition on Miss Somers."

The colonel smiled and walked on.

"My friend," he said presently, "dat man will not get it, but dere is no harm in setting de detective to work. Dey will hunt up every man dat live in dis row and have him before night. Dat is a gain. Now, ve go to see Uncle Joe."

"No, no," said Harvey, earnestly. "First to claim the body. That poor girl! I could not face her if we could not tell her all was arranged decently."

"My dear friend," answered the veteran, "it is plain you are young. De body is in de hands of de aut'ritie. Dey will bury it if no one comes. Jarvis will be dere and he will not spend de monies for de funeral. He will wait for us. Let him wait. It will do him good. We go see Uncle Joe, and den de General Meeks. If he do de right ting we can laugh at dis Jarvis. You be guided by me. I take you right."

They went down-town on the cars and the colonel got out at Bleeker street, and led the way through a labyrinth of streets down to the wharves on the North river.

Thence he proceeded to a blind alley which terminated in a little green garden plot that looked like an oasis of freshness in the wilderness of bricks and mortar.

At the end of this little garden stood a neat and comfortable-looking frame cottage, which was fronted by a very broad and generous piazza, set with tables and chairs.

Across the front of the piazza ran a long sign in blue and gold, which read:

"UNCLE JOE'S."

That was all it said, but the colonel observed as he ascended the steps:

"Dey all know Uncle Joe. He keep de best of everything and de grand people come from all over to see Uncle Joe. Come in."

They ascended the steps and entered a large, rather low room of old-fashioned character, with a little window in one end, behind which could be seen the glittering glasses of a very neat little bar.

The room was furnished with tables and chairs, plain but handsome, and was hung with such excellent pictures that Harvey could not help exclaiming:

"Why, this man is a connoisseur!"

Svenson smiled.

"Old Joe knows his business. Here he comes now. A great man, my friend."

CHAPTER XVIII.

MR. JARVIS GETS ANGRY.

MR. BUCK JARVIS arrived at the "Retreat" that same morning in a very unamiable frame of mind. He had spent a whole night to no purpose, had dropped a good deal of excellent money for very bad whisky in treating his friends of Murderer's Row, and had got himself into a bad scrape, besides coming away without the property he had hoped to secure in the tin box.

Originally a gambler by profession, with the masculine beauty in his prime that comes of a powerful physique and a big mustache, he had captivated the simple widow of the music-teacher—Herbert Somers—fifteen years before, as soon as he found out that the lady had some property of her own.

Failing to coax her out of this in their first year of marriage, he had undertaken to get it by the simpler process of kicking and beating her out of it in the next four.

To his surprise, he had found the little lady gifted with an amazing amount of passive obstinacy and endurance, and with the one fixed idea in her head that her property was a sacred trust for the benefit of her only child, Nina Somers.

For a long time he could not find where she kept her bonds, and when he at last discovered the tin box with her name on it, and opened it to gloat over his prize, he found inside another and much stronger box of iron, which had such an ingenious lock that it could not be picked, and he could not break it open without regular burglars' tools.

Not being at that time in the burglary business, Jarvis had been compelled to seek help, and while he was gone, the little woman, taking unexpected courage from her desperate plight, had actually run away from her lord and master, taking with her Nina, and from that day till that of the bridge accident, Mr. Buchanan Jarvis, better known as "Buck," had never set eyes on wife or on step-daughter.

Yet he had not failed to recognize Nina, and knew that she recogniz'd him. Ten years had not changed either so much that they could not recognize the other, and Nina wore at her neck an ornament of her mother's which Jarvis knew at once, and on the strength of which he had followed and had captured her.

When he came home that morning he had no idea of what had happened in his absence, and fully expected to find his prisoner secure.

The first thing that showed him all was not right was finding the shutters of both the "Advance" and "Retreat" still up at eight o'clock, with a lot of broken glass on the sidewalk, while Myneer Blessing, with a patch over one eye and a bruised lip, stood scowling on his doorstep, a big base-ball club in his hand and a white bandage on his forehead.

Buck stared in wonder. He had never been on bad terms with his neighbor, who had had most of the ill-feeling to himself, but the way Blessing scowled showed that trouble was brewing and had begun already.

A little apprehensive of the club, he stopped at a safe distance to hail Blessing.

"I say, what's the matter? I've been away."

"Maype you'd petter as not shtop und keep dem loafers outer dot blace of yours, don't it?" asked Mr. Blessing, with a more tragical scowl than before. "Don't you vas t'ink ve couldn't dake care oursellufs of, mit all your 'Mericaner vays, py chiminy hokey! I dakes dot par-geeber of yours meinselluf mit disser glub, mit two more like him, Hein! Donnerwetter!"

And Mr. Blessing smote the stone step with his club, and was evidently working himself into a passion.

"What? Have you had a fight?" asked Buck, waking up to what had happened.

Mr. Blessing laughed satirically.

"Did ve vas fight haf, you say? Hein! Mein Gott! Vere vas you porn to-day, and vy you coom from to-morrow, by de living chiminy hokey! Did ve vas a fight haf mit oursellufs, you dink! Ven ve all quiet Turners vas, vich only fant de bier in peace to drink oursellufs mit, and dem grazzy Americaners to deir visky leaff! Did ve vas a vight haf? Don'd dot blace like a vight look? Look at mein vindow, and dot glas, mit your vellers smash! Yes, ve vas a vight haf, and I tell you, Meester Sharvis, for you it lucky vas you vas not dere, or dot kopf would sure proken dieser glub by. Donnerwetter!"

Jarvis saw that a serious fracas had taken place in his absence, and that it was policy to soothe his next door neighbor till he had fully learned what had happened.

So he said to Blessing:

"I'm really very sorry for this. If I had been here it woul'd not have happened. I'll see what I can do about it."

Blessing shook his head menacingly.

"Nodings you can do. I deach you ven de lawyer coom. Look at mein glass."

Jarvis shrugged his shoulders. He was just beginning to get angry.

"Oh curse your glass," he muttered; "look at mine. That's just as bad as yours."

Then he went to his own place, and the first person he met was his bar-keeper, with one arm in a sling, his head bound up, and a generally dilapidated and woebegone look about him, while he slowly poured out with a shaking hand a glass of gin and bitters.

"Why, Jim," cried the boss, amazed; "what's all this? What started this muss? Didn't I tell you to leave those fellows next door alone? It don't pay to fight in business."

"You'd 'a' had to fight yerself and even count yerself darned lucky to get out alive if you'd been here," answered Jim ruefully. "Them Dutch devils next door jest came on us for nothin' at all, like so many hornets, and we had to do the best we knew how."

"But how did it begin?" asked Jarvis angrily. "How did it begin, man? If they've been trying to injure my business, I'll have the law on them, that's what I'll do. How did it begin?"

To the bar-keeper softly rubbed his head.

"How did it begin? Well, boss, do you know, I swear I couldn't tell. There was a couple of gents in here, real stylish fellers, high-toned and all that, you know—"

"Gents. What kind of looking men?" asked Buck eagerly.

"One was a tall, thin feller, quite old; said he come from California, and he was slattering round the stamps lively, settin' 'em up fur all bands—"

"Well, well! And the other?" asked Buck in an irritable way, for he did not recognize the portrait of Colonel Svenson.

"And the other was jest a young dude in dark cloze, with a little silver sword fur a pin in his scarf—"

"The same, curse him!" hissed Buck. "And

so I owe this to him, do I? Curse him! I'll be even with him yet. Go on."

"Well," pursued Jim, "how it happened I don't know, but, fust thing we knowed, we heard the Dutchmen next door was comin' to clean us outer this shebang—"

"Who told you so?" asked Buck quickly. "The young man?"

"No, the old feller. And some of our boys went out to see if 'twas so really, and then we jest heard the glasses smashing, and we was into it hot and heavy."

"And you? what did you do? Didn't you try to stop the row and save my property?"

Jim looked confused.

"I'm blowed if I know, boss."

"Don't know? What do you mean?"

"Well, seems to me I disremember 'zactly what happened, boss; but fust thing I knowed I was a-lyin' down on my back in the yard, and they was just a-lambastin' each other all round as lively as cats over a clothes-line. I got up somehow and waded in. Some feller must have hit me a clout and just knocked me stupid fust off, so I come to in the middle of the muss."

"And what ended it?"

"Do'no', guv'n'er. It ended itself. Kinder got slow and petered out. The Dutchies went back to their place, and we shut up, too. I wish you'd b'en here."

Jarvis made him no answer as he gloomily surveyed the ruins of his saloon.

"It can't be helped now," he observed.

"Where's Mag and Rose?"

"Up-stairs, I reckon," was the answer. "They had a part of the muss too. I heard Mag screeching and hollerin' blue murder one time."

Jarvis turned pale, as for the first time the idea struck him that he might have lost Nina Somers, and he rushed up-stairs, two steps at a time, shouting:

"Mag! Mag! Where'n blazes are ye? Come here, I tell ye. Whar's that gal?"

No answer came to his cries, but he heard a shuffling footstep in an upper room, as if a woman were running across it in a hurry and burst into the chamber, to find Mag crouched in a corner, her eyes dilated with terror, while she whimpered:

"Oh, fur God's sake, Buck! I couldn't help it. They come and took her. There was a terrible old fight. They jest took her. Before God, I couldn't help it. Don't hit me."

"You cursed bag," he hissed, taking from the wall where it hung a buggy-whip. "Didn't I tell yer to keep her? Didn't I? didn't I?"

The woman cowered down.

"Yes, I did, I did, I did," she said, ashy pale and holding up her arm to ward off the blow she knew was coming. "I did keep her, Buck. They come, two on 'em, and took her by force. Jest knocked me down. Oh!"

But her cry was too late to avert the cut the brute aimed at her with the skill of long practice, and she fell writhing into the corner, not daring to scream, while he cut at her again and again, till the blood came from her bare shoulders, and she whimpered like a chastised dog.

"There, curse you," he said, when he had done. "I told you to take care of that gal and you've let her go. I reckon you'll do what I tell ye next time or I'll know the reason why."

The poor woman, only glad that the beating was over, looked up at him with the pleading fondness of a dog, saying humbly:

"Yes, Buck."

"Who took her away? One man or two?" he asked her, harshly.

"Two men, Buck. An old and a young one."

"Did you know either of them?"

She nodded eagerly, to propitiate her terrible master, saying:

"Yes, yes; the old one."

Buck's face cleared.

"Who was he?"

"I've seen him many a time," she answered, breathlessly. "He keeps a school for fighters over in the other ward. I don't know the name of the street, but I can take you there any time. The name's up—Svenson."

Buck started slightly.

"Svenson," he muttered. "I've heard of him. They say he's a tough old man."

"Yes," said Mag, eagerly, "so he is, Buck; so he is. It's the same man."

"You shut up," he growled.

"Yes, Buck," she answered, meekly.

"And you're sure it was he came with that young snoozer here, Mag?"

"Yes, Buck."

"Very well," he said abruptly. "Get yer duds and we'll go after her. I ain't goin' to be beat by no Svenson, if he's all the fighters in the city. I'm a-goin' to have my darter and he sha'n't hold her from me."

"That's right, Buck," said the woman gayly, for she never seemed to be so devoted to Buck as after he had given her a terrible thrashing. "I couldn't do nothin' when they come and knocked me down and stamped on me, could I?"

"No, p'raps not," he answered sullenly. "It's a darned lucky thing you knew the old man. If she's in his house, and I git her, it'll be

a lickin' the less fur you, my gal. And the next time you let her go, remember I'll take the bull skin off you. Say! D'y'e hear me?"

He scowled like a demon, and she answered in a breathless, half-giggling sort of way:

"Yes, Buck, yes. I'll never, so help me, never let her go again. I'll—I'll kill her first."

Buck laughed, rather proud of his complete dominion over this bold, coarse woman, who had attracted his fancy a few years before by the way in which she swaggered about among the sailors in a dance-house by the docks.

Mag had then been a handsome woman, of the grandly-modeled kind, with a figure like the Venus of Milo, and black hair that fell below her knees. True, it was coarse and straight, but it was grand hair for all that, and her apple-red cheeks and black eyes made her a fine creature to look at, spite of a broad sensual mouth, full of the grandest of teeth, like those of a negress.

Mag was known in the dance-house as the "Queen of Water street," and was reputed able to whip any man that offered her insult. Buck saw her floor a sailor with a bottle one night, and from that moment was not satisfied till she came to live with him and presided over his new "R-treat."

As a matter of course their connection had not lasted a month before they had a quarrel one night, and Mag undertook to fight Buck, as she had been used to fight sailors with easy victory, for sailors are ashamed to hit women, and a big woman has the best of them, in a contest.

But in Buck she had met, for the first time, a thoroughly remorseless brute, who fought her as if she had been a man, and gave her a tremendous thrashing, which he continued in true rough-and-tumble style till Mag begged for mercy like a whipped dog.

From that night she had been his slave and took all the beatings he chose to give her in the meekest way, not daring to offer any resistance, knowing by experience that she would get it worse in the end if she did. And why did she not leave him, some may ask? There's no law to compel a woman to live with a man who beats her.

Perfectly true, my dear friend, but Mag knew well enough that to leave the "Retreat" was to leave comparative comfort. Not being a legal wife she could claim nothing from Buck and her only resource was to leave him and go elsewhere.

Moreover, Mag, in her coarse way, idolized the ruffian who beat her. He was the only man she had ever feared, and she admired his strength and bullying way among other men. As a rule he treated her kindly, and when he beat her he did it thoroughly, never quitting till she begged for mercy.

Therefore it was that Mag stuck to her master, and was ready to do anything for him, as far as lying, stealing and fighting could serve him.

In ten minutes after he had beaten her she was dressed, ready to go with him, and set off with Buck down the street, to hunt up the "academy" of Colonel Svenson.

As they passed the "Advance," Mr. Blessing scowled sullenly at Buck but offered no opposition to their departure.

CHAPTER XIX.

UNCLE JOE'S SHEBANG.

A VERY large, stout old man, who stood over six feet in his stockings, and must have weighed two hundred and fifty pounds. He had snow-white hair and a long white beard, but his upper lip was shaven.

An old-fashioned American face he had, shrewd and kindly withal, but wearing an air of self-satisfaction that said plainly:

"Talk away, sonny. I know it all."

Such was Uncle Joe, once known as the "Patriarch of the Broadway Squad," now for many years retired and prosperous.

A frosty smile lighted up his face as he saw the colonel, and he said in a deep voice:

"Well, Old Rocks, how goes it? Dropped in to see the old man?"

"Ay, ay," returned the colonel. "Dis gentleman is Meester 'Arvie, friend of mine, Uncle Joe. Vat you t'ink? He nevar saw your place before. Such is fare."

Uncle Joe smiled rather loftily.

"He's young, Oie. He's young. Lordy! the young fellers is comin' up all the time. Me and you ain't no good no more, though we knowed a thing or two in our day. Hey. Old Rocks?"

The colonel laughed gleefully.

"You remembair de old riot, Joe. Hey? Ven you broke t'ree clubs? Hey, boy?"

Joe grinned at the thought.

"Ay, ay. The chief swore the force couldn't stand the expense if I used 'em up so fast. But that's all talk. What'll ye take, gents?"

The colonel sat down at a table.

"Sit do 'n, my friends. Uncle Joe, dis is my treat; yours next. You gif us de old particular. Hey? You forgot how to make dat yet?"

Joe grinned again as he went behind the bar, remarking:

"Dunno, Old Rocks. Ain't no call for that nowadays. Young fellers call fur sham, and

sich like washy stuff, but as fur me, give me the old pertik'ler afore all yer shams and Langtry smashes."

The "old particular" turned out to be a compound of brandy and bitters, which had been the foundation of Joe's reputation in former times, strong and fiery, so that Harvey had to cough as he tasted it.

Uncle Joe had sat down with them, and he favored his old friend with a glance that spoke volumes of good-humored scorn for the young man, as the colonel said:

"Vell, Joe, and how's business?"

Joe pursed up his lips.

"Can't complain. Don't do much in the mornings, as yer see. But we're jest run down every evenin', when they makes up the trots. Doin' any boss now, Ole?"

"No," said the colonel briefly. "De old times was gone, Joe. De town was all built up now. No room for stable. See any of the old boy now, Joe?"

Joe seemed to be considering.

"See Sandy Maginnis now and then. What a man that was bey, Ole? I seen him use up that there British pug that come over here in 'fifty-three, so the cuss never had a chance fur a crack at Sandy! Member him? Lordy! how the Englishman hollered when Sandy got his thumb in his eye."

And Joe chuckled at the recollection, while the colonel observed to Harvey:

"Uncle Joe used to be some on de fight himself when he vas off duty. He can tell you great story. Come, Joe, fill 'em up again. Meestair 'Arvie, you take 'noder particular?"

Harvey apologized.

"No, thank you, something light. I'm not used to drinking."

Old Joe chuckled as he rolled off to the bar, remarking:

"Young fellers ain't what they used to be, hey, Ole! I'll give him a mild one. Reg'lar old-time soothin' syrup."

His idea of soothing syrup proved to be a milk punch; only a whit weaker than the "old particular," and while he made it, the colonel whispered to Harvey:

"He vill talk to-day. Business is dull, and de particular make him go."

When they were seated again, the colonel said in a careless way:

"Let me see. How long vas you on de force, Joe? Ten year, vas it?"

"Ten year!" echoed Joe, scornfully. "Yes, and thirty more atop o' that, Old Rocks. I were one of the fust sworn in, when the Wbigs had the State, cuss 'em, and I staid on till I got too fleshy to walk past any more. Took me in the feet, ye know. Couldn't run like I useder."

"You must have seen a great many strange sights in your time," observed Harvey, to set the old man talking.

Uncle Joe winked solemnly and drained his glass, observing:

"You bet your boots, sonny."

Then he shut up his lips and gazed stolidly at the table till the colonel touched Harvey's foot and said aloud:

"Talking dry work, hey, Joe? Set dem up."

"Bring some cigars," added Harvey, and Uncle Joe instantly rose and lumbered to the bar, from whence he returned with four or five cigar-boxes, which he set on the table, saying:

"Take your choice, and let's see if yer know how to choose a cigar, sonny."

Harvey inspected the boxes and finally selected a cigar, a choice which seemed to please the old man; for he said to the colonel with a more placable grunt:

"Darned if he didn't pitch on it, first pop. Them's my gilt-edge."

"Leave it on the table," said Harvey, willing to please Uncle Joe. "Help yourself, Uncle. I'm not much of a drinking man. My head won't stand it."

Uncle Joe seemed pleased, for he said:

"That's right, sonny, that's right. You ain't like the rest of 'em. They'll come in and order as if they was old stock, and then has to have their friends take 'em home. Can't stand it, and ashamed to own up. Here, don't you take no more of that soothin' syrup. I'll make you a soda cocktail."

And he did so in the manner of a father who gave his son medicine, while Svenson whispered to Harvey:

"You got 'eem. Keep buy de cig r, and be talk. It vill cost us 'bout five dollar. He like sell cigar."

When Uncle Joe came back to the table and set in to smoke, the old man's tongue at last seemed to be loosened, for he said to Harvey, after lighting his cigar:

"What was that you said, jest now?"

"I was thinking that you must have seen a good deal in your time," answered Harvey.

"Ay, ay, sonny, so I did, so I did. Them was the days when men was men. When I went on the force in 'thirty-eight, there warn't no beggars in the hull country. Never see'd one fur years arter. All changed now. Didn't have no fellers in livery then to hold bosses and fold their arms. Lordy! the President hisself wouldn't ha' dared no sich games."

"But the police in those times were not as well organized as now," suggested Harvey. "I have heard that—"

"You've heard a lot," interrupted Joe. "I tell yer these bloomin' fools that talk about the force don't know nothin'. Why, these fellers is babbies to what we had to do. We didn't have a quarter the men, and there was Five Points, a reg'lar fightin' hole. I tell yer, times was tough, then. They ain't no sich places now."

"But, only yesterday I came across a place, in the empty lots up-town, by Harlem, that they call Murderer's Row," said Harvey, "and it seemed to me a pretty tough place."

Old Joe blew out some smoke.

"Murderer's Row? Ay, ay, I've heern tell of that place. Iain't b'en there myself. Irish, isn't it?"

"There are some Irish shanties near it," assented Harvey.

Uncle Joe broke out hotly:

"Mightier knewed it. Them Irish is mean as dirt. If I had my way, I'd drive 'em all out. They hadn't orter have a vote, cuss 'em! It's the ruin of the country! That feller were right when he said, 'Don't put none but Americans on guard.' Hey! what a time we had when the Know-Nothens got up."

"Were you a Know-Nothing?" asked Harvey.

"You bet, sonny, I were that," said Uncle Joe, smiting the table with all the vehemence of old times. "I voted fur General Jackson when I cast my fust, and I were solid fur the old times rocks till they got to lettin' the Irishers run the machine."

"But it's not the Irish that are the trouble at Murderer's Row," said Harvey. "It's the hard cases below. The Irish live up in the shanies on the rocks."

"Ay, ay, squatters we called 'em, cuss 'em," the old man grumbled. "I wouldn't trust 'em. Never knowed one that wouldn't turn on a friend in a hole. It was them laid out poor Jake Vredenburg."

Svenson pressed Harvey's foot under the table and said carelessly:

"Let's see. He was killed in the riots, was he not, Joe?"

Joe nodded rather gloomily.

"Ay, ay," he said, "pretty nigh to it. Right alongsider me too, pore feller. Better if he had a b'en killed, I say."

"Who was he?" asked Harvey.

The old ex-policeman made no reply. He was thoughtfully looking at the table, and puffing at his cigar, and it was not till the question was repeated that he said:

"Scuse me, sonny. Didn't hear. Who was Jake Vredenburg? Well, he was my pardner on the toughest beat ever laid out fur two cops. That's what he were. A better man than Jake never walked. He warn't so hefty as me, p'raps, but he was all there, every switch of him. Ay, ay, pore old Jake! He was a good man."

He absently drained his glass, and took another cigar, when the colonel said:

"Fill 'em up again, Joe. My friend is your man. Tell us dat story. I forget de most of it."

"But ye don't forget Jake?" said Uncle Joe, earnestly. "Lordy, Ole, ye don't forget him, surely. Why, he was the only man on the force could come up to you with the sticks in them days, and I warn't no slouch myself nuther."

"Fill 'em up again," repeated Svenson. "I remember him well. He vas goot at de steek for an amateur. Fill 'em up."

Uncle Joe departed for the bar with an accession of dignified ponderosity that was his only indication of three horns of brandy and bitters, that would have floored nine out of ten men.

When he came back and sat down, his face was grave and gloomy, as if the train of thoughts aroused by the reference to his old friend were of a saddening nature.

"Your friend was hurt in the draft riots?" said Harvey inquiringly, after a pause.

"Ay, ay," answered Uncle Joe absently, "in the riots, when you was a kid, I reckon. We had a hot time fur three days, afore the milish come back."

He drank another glass, relighted his cigar, and smoked absently for awhile, till Svenson said:

"I heard dat he vas shot."

"No, no," said Uncle Joe. "That warn't so. I seen the hull of it. Jake were right aside of me the hull time."

"And how did it happen?" asked Harvey.

The old man gave an uneasy motion of his shoulders and settled into his seat again.

"I s'pose I'll have to tell the hull story," he said rather reluctantly.

"I should take it as a great favor," Harvey responded readily. "I like these reminiscences of old days, you know. If I had been a man, I should have been a soldier, very likely."

Old Joe nodded gloomily.

"Ay, ay, they all say that. Melbe ye would, and melbe not. I guess the sogers didn't have it no harder nor we did, them three days. But I never took much stock in the sogers, young feller. I was a old-fashioned hard-shelled Hun-

ker, I was, and I don't keer who knows it. The niggers was a darned sight better off in them days, cuss 'em! They wanter be made to work, and them dodrotted old Abolishers was all thieves, every one of 'em."

Old Joe seemed to be warming up to political recollections of old times, after the manner of his kind, and Harvey rather hurriedly said:

"But your friend, Jake Vredenburg? Don't forget him, Mr.—ah—"

"Marks—Marks is my name, sonny. No; I ain't like to forget Jake, I ain't. But I get kinder mad when I think o' them days, and what a fine country we had till them— But never mind; that's all past and gone now."

"Jake and you were togeder in de riot," said the colonel, adroitly. "Is not dat so?"

"Ay, ay. Me and him had b'en pardners fur nigh on ten year, Ole. You know that. I'd relieved him, and we'd come off post together, ever since we jined the force. Somehow we ailers managed to get into the same precinct and the same platoon every time. Now it was on the same post when I relieved Jake and him me, and again it was on the next beat to each other."

"We'd worked many a job together, and did detective dooty in pairs. Chief useder put us on whenever there was toughs to bring up, and we'd never lost a case yet. Jake and me was different one way. I was kinder soft-hearted at times 'bout lettin' off the sneaks w'ot turned crooks outer sheer poverty, but Jake was as hard as iron. Orders was orders with him, and if the chief had told him to run in his own daddy and mammy, I b'lieve Jake wouldn't ha' softened a bit. He was dooty right up to the handle all the time."

"And how came he to be killed?" asked Harvey, trying to cut the old man short in his prolix wanderings.

"He warn't killed, but he might better ha' b'en," was Uncle Joe's gloomy reply. "Well, ye see, them draft-riots come up all of a sudden like. The rebs was a-comin' up North, and they had a call fur more troops, and the provos* come down on us like a lot of hungry wolves, a-grabbin' every one. That was the time all the tellers that had stamps was a takin' the train to Cannady. Wanted to see the Falls, you know, and all that; and they was a grabbin' 'em at the Suspension Bridge. And the pore sellers as couldn't get off was gittin' their names took down to go to the front, and they didn't like it fur a cent. And when the provos' got up-town among the shanties and Irisbers, they began to cut up ugly, and wouldn't give their names. And then come the news cur tellers was a-unin', and old Lee a-givin' 'em fits in Pennsylvania. Twarn't so, ye know, but the Irisbers thought it was, and they jest hollered the war was over, and they warn't goin' to have no draft. So it got wuss and wuss, till one day a big mob come howlin' down-town, and burnt the newspaper offices, and we was all called out to put down the riots."

"Ay, ay, I mind it well, though it's twenty year ago. The mob was jest a-b'ilin' over, like the scum on a pot, and we was naught but a handful like, and couldn't do nothin' with 'em fur the numbers. We'd knock 'em in one place, and they'd start up in ten more, so the streets was jest rainin' bricks and bottles, not to say bullets, on us, wherever they seen a cop's buttons."

CHAPTER XX.

UNCLE JOE'S STORY.

"IT was the second day of the riots," pursued Uncle Joe, "that Jake and me broke five clubs between us. Ye see the Irisbers had got hold of the Arsenal up town; stole a lot of guns, and so on. And they'd bein' goin' fur the niggers shameful, I must say, though I hate a nigger worse'n p'sen. And we was sent up to take back the Arsenal, and by gum, we did it too! Jake and me, we was at the head of the party that went up them steps. They put in the heavy weights fust, and light men wouldn't ha' b'en no sorter use in that place. We had our night clubs, and lots more to spare, and we jest waded in to kill, so long as we took the Arsenal. I bruk my club over one Irisber, and he went down like a log, and then Jake he broke hisn, and they shoved more on from the rear arter we was played out, and finally we got in."

"And was Jake hurt there?" asked Harvey.

"No, sonny. You hold your horses. Who's a-tellin' this story? It didn't lie in no man's boots to kill Jake in a fight, with his eyes open. We tuk the Arsenal, and hadn't no more nor got settled and the wires runnin', when the chief sends a message how they was raisin' Cain at a big clothin' store down-town. So we left a guard and went away as hard as we could, 'bout three hundred of us, in the street cars, lickety split, till we got nigh the Park, when we had to charge in again. That time I

* Probably Mr. Marks referred to the "provost-marshals," who were charged with the duty of enforcing the draft, and began by enumerating the names. A great many timid souls took refuge in Canada during the draft of 1868, and the provost-marshall at Suspension Bridge was arresting men at the line every day on suspicion of evading the draft.

had two clubs, one in each hand. There was plenty of 'em; for we had to leave nigh twenty men, hurt, at the Arsenal. And Jake he had two clubs too, and the way we did everlastin'ly soak it to them fellows was a caution. I kept on hittin' like I'd never get enough, and Jake was like a wild man, till the mob ran, and I found both my clubs cracked, and then broke just clean off, nigh the handle."

"Dat vas hard hittin'," said the colonel.

"You bet, Ole. Jake he'd only bruk one his of clubs, but the way the fellers lay round in the gutters where we'd dropped 'em was a caution, I tell you."

"Were any of you hurt?" asked Harvey.

Uncle Joe screwed up his face.

"Youder thort so ef you'd b'en thar, sonny. They was shootin' pistols and cobble-stones and bricks all the time. Only they didn't have our locusts, and we druv 'em whenever we closed on 'em. It was neck or nothen'. We had to club or git killed. Then, when we got things about quieted down at last, the sopers come in, and when they got at 'em, mowin' 'em down with their volleys, Mr. Mob, he kinder faded away like, arter a day or two."

"But Jake, how was he hurt?" asked Harvey.

Uncle Joe scowled deeply.

"Ay, ay, I'm comin' to that. I shall allers blame the chief fur that. He hadn't orter put no man to sich a resk. Not but that we all thought Jake could take care of himself."

"But what was it?" asked Harvey impatiently. "You forget I don't understand all this."

"You're right, sonny, you're right," said Uncle Joe, apologetically. "I'll get it straight in a little, after awhile. Ye see, jest arter the sopers come, we of the force had to do a good deal of up town dooty, fur the mob was started by the Irishers in the shanties, and Central Park weren't what it is now, in those days. There was one place up by the Park, in those times, went by the name of Jackson's Hole. It were a swamp on one side, with a lot of rocks on the other, jest filled with shanties. In those times the squatters wouldn't pay no rent, and it was as much as a man's life was worth to ax 'em fur it in daylight, before the streets was run through. Nowadays it ain't so. The streets divides 'em into little patches, and they can't get up the shindies they useder to. The swamp's b'en drained they tell me, and the sewers run through it all."

"Whereabouts was this place?" asked Harvey, and Svenson pressed his foot warningly as Uncle Joe mentioned the very locality that Harvey knew as Murderer's Row.

"Me and Jake," continued the veteran, not heeding the interruption, "was took off patrol arter the riot and put on de'ective dooty to find out some of the ring-leaders who'd sacked the big clothin'-house, and where do you think we was sent to? Why, right up into Jackson's Hole, by gum, with orders to find a man called Buck Snedecor, a feller who'd b'en gambler, spy, and everything else for the rebels and our side, whichever pa' i best. He was said to be hidin' up in Jackson's Hole, and we was to get him somehow. Well, what's the matter, sonny? What d'y'e want to say?"

Harvey's air of excitement prompted the question, and the young man said eagerly:

"What was that man's name?"

"Buck Snedecor."

"Buck? Why did they call him Buck?"

"His name, I reckon, sonny."

"But I know a Buck Jarvis."

"Likely enough, sonny. Buck's quite a name, or used to be in old times."

"What sort of a man was this Buck?"

"A tall, slim feller, dressed to kill, with a big mustache. Called himself a fighter, I reckon. Ever met him?"

"No, no. At least I think not."

Harvey sunk back in his seat disappointed. The description did not suit Buck Jarvis.

"A tall, slim fellow, dressed to kill."

Buck was a big, fat fellow, rather slovenly in his dress and bearing, and did not look as if he could ever have been "tall and slim, dressed to kill."

"Well, sonny," continued Uncle Joe. "Me and Jake was tuck from a down-town precinct to look arter Buck Snedecor, jest 'cause it was thought we wouldn't be known to the Irishers up in the shanties by Jackson's Hole. And that's jest where the chief made his mistake."

"Why?" asked Harvey.

"Why, ye see the only thing certain 'bout the hull thing was that we wouldn't know them. As for their knowing us, he might have saved his pains. We was spotted too well in the riots by more'n one of 'em, and I told Jake, says I, 'Tain't no use tryin' to make out we ain't cops. They'll drop on us anyhow,' says I. And Jake he 'lowed that was so."

"Then you went up in uniform?" asked Harvey, astonished.

"Sartin we did, sonny. There's suthin' in the sight of the brass buttons that kinder makes the roughs think twice'nt afore they gets up a muss, and arter the riots they was more keeful than before. They knowed we'd club, and when we clubbed we meant to hurt, by gum! Yes, the chief didn't give us no orders 'cept to

git Buck Snedecor. The rest he left to us. So me and Jake we jest went up in broad daylight through Jackson's Hole, with two clubs apiece. I found out that a feller can handle two as well as one if he's b'en taught to use both hands, and me and Jake used to be counted pretty good with our hands in any sorter muss. Our revolvers we didn't carry outside, but we had 'em, all the same. You orter seen the muss we kicked up the fust day when we went inter Jackson's Hole. All the Irishers was thinkin' we wanted them, and the troops come a-marchin' right through there at the same time, so they thought it was a put-up job to scoop 'em all. They didn't dare to raise so much as a finger the fust day, and we went through more'n half the shanties as hold as you please."

"And did you catch Buck?" asked Harvey.

"Hold your horses, sonny. No. If he was anywhere in those shanties the fust day, they kept him almighty close, you bet. The second day there warn't no troops there, but we went all the same, and they was more skeered than ever, thinkin' we wanted to pik a muss. We went through the last of the shanties that day, and didn't find our man, but we spotted two that had been in at the burnin' of the Nigger Orphan 'Sylum, and by gum, we ran 'em in, then and there."

"And didn't they fight?" asked Harvey.

"Nary fight," answered Uncle Joe. "They was that took aback by our knowin' 'em they give up like lambs, and we took 'em off with a bull mob follerin' arter us, growlin' and tryin' to git up their spunk, but they didn't dare tech us, and we got our men off safe. The chief was proud, I tell ye, and we got a good name for grit. Reckon that was what made us keeless arterward. Well, sonny, to cut a long story short, we mide up our minds to take one more shy at the shanties for Buck, and to go in the night. Jake he 'lowed Snedecor wouldn't show up in daylight, and he was right. But he were too confilent of his game when he thought we could go through there in the night as well as the day. That night we put on a duster each over our buttons, and started out arter dark to Jackson's Hole, timin' so's we'd git there at fust about midnight. Sure enough, the shanties was all dark and quiet, and we had the hull place to ourselves, till we seen a light at the top of a rock, and says Jake to me, says he: 'Joe, I'll bet that if Buck Snedecor's anywhere here, we'll find out at that light. Some one's awake, and that means business.' Says I to him: 'What are we goin' to do?' Says he to me: 'We're goin' up there, and if we find any one we're goin' to run him in.' Ard with that he goes straight up to the shanty and me arter him. It stood alone on a rock that looked over all the rest of the place, and the highest shanty was a hundred feet away, while, on the back side of the rock, was a drop of twenty feet and beyond that a steep slope down to the swamp below. We could jest see the line of gas lamps in the avenoo, a long way below, and the highest station was a mile off, out thataway."

"Vy did you not go for help?" asked Colonel Svenson, suddenly. "You might've made good raid in de night."

Old Joe sighed slightly.

"Reckon you're right, but me and Jake was set on bringin' in Buck Snedecor alone. We didn't want no one to divide the credit. So we crept up to the shanty, and peeped in at the winder. Jest as I'd expected there was the man we were arter, sittin' at a table eatin' like he was starved, and a woman a-standin' by him, watchin' him kinder scared like. Every now and then she'd start as if she thought she heard something, and go to the door to look out, and every time she did, he'd put his hat afore the candle to shade it. Me and Jake could see them through a little winder at the back, that they didn't 'spect, I reckon, for they never come thare to look; and says Jake to me, says he in a whisper: 'That's big woman. She's b'en a-bidin' him all this time. We'll never have sich another chance. Come on.'

Here Uncle Joe paused abruptly, and Harvey felt the colonel press his foot under the table to warn him to silence.

Presently the old man resumed.

"I don't know what it was made me feel kinder sorry for that woman that night, but somehow I couldn't help it. She warn't extry good-lookin', but the way she looked at that feller set me to thinkin' of a mother with a baby, and I whispers to Jake: 'Wait a bit. Listen to what they say.' So he laid still and so did I, and presently she says to Buck:

"Oh, Buck, what a life this is to lead! If we were only safe away in Canada, how I would bless God for his mercy! He looked up with his mouth full, and says, kinder sneerin' like: 'You hadn't orter growl. They ain't arter you!' 'No,' says she, 'but if they take you I shall surely die too. Why won't you take my advice, Buck, and get away now, while you can?' 'Because,' says he, with the same sneer, 'I've got other fish to fry. There's a nice gal on the avenoo wants me to marry her, and if I run away now I won't git the chance. This thing'll blow over, you'll see. Them two cops'll get all they want to-morrer.' I pinched Jake to lay still, for he half got up when he

heard that, but presently the woman says in a kinder stiff way: 'I know I'm not a lady, Buck; but I love you better than any girl on the avenoo can, and she can't help ye like I kin. Why won't you go now? My cousin will take care of you at once.' 'Your cousin be darned,' says he, 'I don't want to git into no stinkin' old ship's hold, and be carried out to sea as a mean stowaway. I tell ye this will blow over. I've got friends in Washington.' With that Jake gits up and whispers to me: 'We'll see 'bout that.' So we goes round to the door, and who should pop right out on us but the woman, afore we could git in."

"Well, and what did she do?" asked Harvey.

Old Joe passed his hand over his brow.

"Well, sonny, don't never tell me woman's got no spunk. The moment that woman, so quiet and gentle-like, set eyes on us two, though we was rigged out in the dusters, she spotted us in a twinklin', give a screek that might have woke a dead man, and grapples me like a tigress, clawin' for my eyes by gum, like a old rough-and-tumble fighter, and bitin' like all possessed. I tell ye I had as much as I c'u'd do to keep my eyes from bein' dug out fust pop, and somehow I couldn't club a woman."

"But Buck, what of him?"

"I dunno, sonny. I swear I dunno. I had all I could attend to and my face was clawed up as it was, while she kep' on screechin' and I heard fellers shoutin' and runnin' over the rocks arter us. At last I jest fairly tore her off me, and sent her down kerplump on the shanty floor, when I got a chance to look, and there was the Irishers a-comin', with rocks in their hands, shoutin' bloody murder. Where Jake was, I didn't know, and Buck was gone. The candle was out in the scrimmage, and I seen it were no place fur me. I jest dropped down the side of the rock, best I knowed how, and found some of 'em there before me, holierin' 'Kill the copper! kill him!' Sonny, you see I'm a pretty hefty man now, and I were as strong as a common horse in those days, but I had all I knowed to do that night, with two clubs, and it warn't till I got to the swamp I beat 'em off. In the mud they couldn't git out of my way, and I jest laid 'em out and got off to the station-house, fur help. Well, for short, I tuk back a hull platoon to look for Jake, and we found him at last."

"Where?" asked Harvey, eagerly.

"At the edge of the swamp, all clubbed to pieces, so I didn't know him, 'cept for what they'd left of his uniform. They'd cracked his skull, broke both arms, smashed his legs with rocks, and smashed in his hull face with stampin'. And all through it, by gum, he'd hilt on to his man. We found a torn coat still clutched in his hands, and learned arterwards how it was. He had got Snedecor first pop, and stunned him with a tap, so he wouldn't make no noise. Then he'd dragged him over the rock, and all the way down to the swamp, where they come up with him and sat on him. He could ha' got off as I did, but he wouldn't let go his man, and that's how they double banked poor Jake Vrederburg."

CHAPTER XXI.

BAD NEWS.

"AND was he killed?" asked Harvey. Uncle Joe shook his head.

"No, sonny. Lucky for him if he had been."

"Why? What do you mean?"

"He'd 'a' gone to his grave a man, and we'd ha' put him up a bully tombstone, you bet. For he was a man."

"And what happened to him then?"

"Sonny, I told ye he was all smashed up. He hadn't a bone hardly but what was broke, and he laid thare like a dead man, so we thought he was really dead. We took him to the station, and the doctor, arter feelin' him, told us he were alive yet. And then that doctor began to set the bones, and Jake lyin' still all the time. When that was done, the doctor told me there warn't much chance for my pore pard, 'cause there was something of the brain—"

"Concussion," suggested Harvey.

"Suthin' like that, I guess, but disremember. Anyway, his skull was cracked in two places, and some of the bits of bone was a-stickin' in his brain. Ard the doctor 'lowed he'd have to cut a hole in Jake's head to see what was the matter, and while he was doin' it, Jake come to, and give sich a groan, it 'd ha' froze yer heart to hear it. Poor old Jake!"

The veteran sighed deeply, and was silent so long, that Harvey ventured to ask:

"And what became of him? Did he die?"

"No, sonny. I wish to God he had. Poor Jake! He was the best-lookin' man I ever see'd afore that, tall as I be, but slender-like. Looked like he warn't as strong as I be, but as hard as steel, and I couldn't wrastle with him, nobow. And thare he laid, ruined by them ddrotted Irishers! No, he didn't die—worse luck. Doctor said he'd the constitoshan of a horse. He got well in body, with every limb broke. But when he got better he didn't know nobody—not even me, his old pardner. He were just as rawney and simple as a babbie till he got strong, and then he got outrageous, and the doctors said he was as crazy as a bedbug. So they shipped him

off to the island,* and I didn't have no more heart to stay in the force arter that, though I tried it till long arter the war. Pore Jake! I used to go and see him now and then, and his heart seemed to warm up to the old buttons when he fust see 'em; but it didn't last. He never knowed me, and that cut me to the heart. Ah, well, it's all over now, pore feller."

"How? What happened?" asked Harvey.

"I seen it in the papers, how the pore feller got out of the 'sylum, and tried to swim the river, 'bout three months ago, and he was drownded in Hell Gate. I went over to find out, and they told me 'twas so. He got in the way of a steamer in the middle of the night, and she sunk him. They didn't find his body fur a week, and then it was all eat up by the fishes. I buried what was left myself. Pore old Jake!"

Then he suddenly seemed to rouse himself up, and said more briskly:

"All past and gone, hey, Old Rocks? Come, sonny, it's my treat now. What'll ye have? When I get to tellin' old times I dunno when to stop. Ole, here, oughtn'ter let me."

And he lumbered off to the bar to refill the glasses, while Harvey, whose interest had been excited by the story to a degree he did not care to conceal, sat thinking of the terrible struggle in which the daring policeman had been disabled, and trying to connect Jake Vredenburg with the insane "Night Walker" of Murderer's Row.

The only obstacle to the theory was the death of Vredenburg at the island, and he asked, when Uncle Joe came back:

"Were you certain that it was Vredenburg's body that you buried, Uncle Joe?"

The old man nodded gloomily.

"Yes, sonny, sartain. I knowed it by the marks on it."

"But I thought it was eaten by fishes."

"So it was, sonny, and pretty far gone too, but one arm was left all right, and there was some tattooin' left that I knowed. Jake was a master hand to tattoo, and he kep' it up arter he was crazy. Only thing he seemed to remember of all his life. No, no, sonny. It was Jake I buried. To be sure he'd changed a good deal, but the wardens, who knowed his last looks better'n I did, said how 'twere Jake, and I were thankful to get the chance to plant him decent."

"And Snedecor? Was he caught?"

"Never, sonny. Reckon he was right and had big friends in Washington. We never seen him till arter the war, and then no ones care'd bout what any one else had done while the fightin' were goin' on. He set up a gamblin'-house in Washington and did well, I heard, under old Grant. Here ye are, sonny. This soothin' syrup won't hurt ye, I reckon."

They were prevented from further converse of the confidential kind by the entrance of customers, and the colonel soon after gave his companion a signal to come away, when they departed, after leaving with Uncle Joe an amount of money so out of proportion to the amount of provender furnished that Svenson observed as they went out:

"Uncle Joe, he know how to charge. He ask dat for de stores, I suppose."

Harvey seemed thoughtful as he walked on, and presently said:

"I believe that 'Night Walker' and Jake Vredenburg are the same man."

Svenson shrugged his shoulders.

"How can dat be? De man is dead."

"I don't believe it. Joe thinks he is, but it is plain the old man was anxious to find an excuse for believing his death, and he admits that the body was unrecognizable, save for some tattooing. Sailors are generally tattooed on the arms, and this may have been a drowned sailor. There are plenty of them in New York harbor any day."

"Dat is true," said the colonel, thoughtfully, "and dat remind me it is time to go get dat poor ladee's body."

Harvey started at the thought.

"Yes, by heavens, I had almost forgotten that. It is truly time. Let us go to the Morgue. If Jarvis is there, what shall we do?"

"Let him claim the body," said Svenson promptly. "He vill not dare do it. Besides, he cannot tell for certain vere de young ladee is. He do not know me."

"But if we claim the body, what then? He will have a right to ask for his step-child."

"True. Well, leave it alone. We vill hit on some plan, I t'ink."

They took their way to the Morgue and found, much to their surprise and relief, that Buck Jarvis was not there, and had not been there all the day.

Glad to find themselves in such good luck, they burriedly claimed the body and departed for Brooklyn, rejoiced at their success so far. The city undertaker had provided a plain pine coffin for the remains; but Harvey ordered a more appropriate receptacle, and made arrangements for a quiet funeral, for which he became responsible.

As they walked away, Svenson said:

* Probably Blackwell's Island Lunatic Asylum.

"Meester 'Arvie, my dear friend, dis vill not do. You are not rich. You cannot take on yourself dis exp-nse. Ve must go find dat General Meeks. He is relative."

"Not yet," said Harvey earnestly. "Let us go back first, and comfort her heart, poor girl. She will be so anxious. Besides, I am not so poor as you think. I can afford to do a kindness to one who is helpless and alone."

The colonel shrugged his shoulders.

"My dear friend, it is very plain vat is de mattare vid you."

"What?"

Harvey colored as he asked the question with affected innocence.

"You are in loaf," said the colonel dryly. "Dat is quite plain. And you know nothing of de ladees, but she is beautiful."

"I know she is an angel," said Harvey, warmly, at which the colonel held his peace, and they pursued their way to Brooklyn.

When they reached the academy, the colonel started and exclaimed:

"Vat has happen? Vat dose people stare so for? Can it be—"

A group of people on the sidewalk were lounging about, looking curiously at the house, and a policeman was just coming down the steps.

The colonel rushed up to him.

"Vat has happen? Vat is it?"

The policeman recognized him as a well-known man in the ward, and said, civilly enough:

"Nothin' much, I reckon, colonel. Only the madam's cut up about the lady going away."

"Lady going away?" echoed Harvey, with a pale face.

The colonel said nothing, but pressed his arm warningly, and they went burriedly into the house, where they found the senora in tears in the academy.

As soon as she saw them, she broke out:

"Ah, Ole, mi hijo, v'y did you go? It would not be if you vas here. He did come wiz ze algaazil, and vat could I do? De senorita is gone, is gone! E would not let her stay von minute."

Harvey was very pale and the colonel hardly less disturbed, but the veteran preserved his calmness enough to say:

"Mamma querida, do not fret. We know it vas not your fault. I should have stayed here to guard you. Tell me how it happened. Tell us all."

Then the story came out, with many tears and appeals to the saints and other little digressions, needless to record.

The substance of it was that a lady, very richly dressed, but with a bold, hard face, had called there, pretending that she had a son who wished to take lessons, and that, as soon as she ascertained the colonel to be absent and the senora alone in the house, she had changed her tone.

Pretending to be a relative of Nina Somers, she announced herself as Mrs. General Mix of Fifth avenue, who had heard of the death of Mrs. Somers, and wished to see her niece.

The senora, completely deceived, and knowing that there was a General Mix, uncle to Nina, had readily consented to an interview, and wished to take the lady up-stairs.

The lady had declined on the plea of not liking to climb stairs, and proposed that Nina be brought down to her, that her carriage was in waiting to take her niece home. She would wait for her, she said. The senora, still more confident that her visitor was all right, went up to give Nina the news and threw the poor girl into a fever of joyful excitement that her uncle had relented toward her. When they came downstairs, the lady was not alone.

A big man with a roustache, and a policeman, were there; and what followed, the senora could hardly tell. She was threatened with prosecution for having abducted Nina from her legal guardian, the policeman standing stolidly by and refusing to interfere. The end of it was that the big man and the bold-faced lady half-led, half-dragged the poor girl to the carriage, and she was driven away, not two minutes before the colonel and Harvey returned home, so confident all was right.

When the poor lady's story was ended, the two men looked at each other.

"It's all over," said Harvey gloomily. "We can never get her back now, I fear."

The colonel closed his teeth under his long white mustache.

"Say you so, my friend? Meestaire 'Arvie, you surprise me. No, no, de old man is not beat so easie. I vill get dat girl back yet. You see, you see. De old man is woke up now. Buck Jarvis! Aba! it is not a Buck can beat a Norseman, v'en he is in earnest. Dat fellow he have black eyes, and I bet on de blond' all de time. You are blond', my friend. I back de blue eye and de v'ite head to vin all de time. I show you. Let me t'ink a bit. I tell you."

And the colonel sunk into a brown study, knitting his bushy brows.

As for Harvey, he knew not what to say or think.

Nina was once more in the power of her brutal step-father, and how was she to be rescued? He could see no way to do it.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE RICH RELATION.

THE result of the colonel's cogitations came out in a few moments with the remark:

"I 'ave it. Vego to dat Meeks."

Harvey nodded gloomily.

"It's our only chance—and a slim one at that."

"Why?" asked the colonel.

"I know the man well. He's one of the clients of our house."

"Aha! dat is good. E vill know you."

Harvey smiled.

"Yes. But I fear that is no advantage."

"Wby, my dear friend?"

"He is a rich man; one of the kind who grew rich without work, by the rise in property. They're all the same—hard as flint."

"Nevertheless, ve most go see him," said the colonel. "He is relativ, and he can act. Ve haf no right."

Then he spoke to his mother:

"Ve have to go again. You are not 'fraid to stay here now! I vill tell de police to look after de house."

The senora shook her head tearfully.

"Dey vill no more come. But vat s'all I do vid de girl, de servants'

"Kate O'Donnell?" asked Harvey, surprised.

"What? Is she here?"

"Why, yes. She do not know anything of it yet," said the senora. "She go out to de office to get a place, and has not come back yet."

"To get a place?" echoed Harvey. "Why, I thought she was to stay with Miss Somers!"

"She say she want to, but de young ladee say no. She could no longer her pay, and she give her de ring from her fingaire to sell for her. She ver' proud ladee, de senorita. She no like, she say, to be a burden on us. She say she see ve are not reech. So de girl go out to sell de ring, and get a place for herself, vile de senorita stay here."

The colonel looked troubled at the news.

"Dese peasant dey are full of simplicitee," he said to Harvey. "Ven she come back and find her ladee gone she vill be like mad woman, and go run abroad, like fool, try find her. Vat shall ve do? Ve must not tell her de senorita is stole; she must t'ink she 'ave gone to her uncle, de general. Ay, ay, mamma, dat is it—you will tell her dat. She vill not be trouble den."

The senora looked relieved.

"Yes, yes; I tell her dat. She vill cry, but she vill be quiet."

Having settled so much to their own satisfaction as well as they could, Harvey and the colonel sallied out on their furtive expedition in search of the General Mix, of whom so much was expected.

As they went down the street, Colonel Svenson said, thoughtfully:

"Meestair 'Arvie, my dear friend—"

"Yes, colonel."

"All dis time you has not been to de office. Dis vill not do; you vill lose your place."

Harvey shook his head.

"No. Yesterday was a holiday, you know, and I can excuse myself for to-day. To-morrow, I admit, I cannot stay away without some inquiry. But I don't know how it is. I cannot explain it. But I am determined to get this poor girl out of her trouble, even if it costs me my place. I never felt so before; I don't understand it."

The colonel rubbed his nose.

"I t'ink I understand it, my dear friend. You are in loaf. Well, ve go on. After all, it may not be bad t'ng for you."

They sought the mansion in Fifth avenue where General Mix resided, and Harvey sent up his card to the general, who sent down word he would receive the gentleman shortly.

Harvey and Svenson were shown into a little room, very dingy and plain, not at all like one's ideas of a millionaire's apartments, and had to cool their heels there for nearly an hour, at the end of which time a message came that the general would see them in the library.

Colonel Svenson, considerably awed by the high and mighty manner in which he had been treated, followed Harvey, expecting to see some grand figure in uniform.

They entered a large and gloomy library, filled with books from floor to ceiling, and saw at one end, by the only spot of light, at a window carefully shaded to admit a certain amount, a desk, at which sat a little dried-up old man, with white hair. He had a hard, selfish face, with half-closed eyes that peered suspiciously at them as they came in, and he asked in a cracked voice:

"Well, young man, what is it? Is Johnson going to give any trouble about that mortgage? If he is, foreclose, foreclose. You don't need any instructions for that. Mr. Smith knows my general orders well enough."

"Pardon me, general," said Harvey, "but it was not on business from the office that I came."

The old man pursed up his lips and looked ill-tempered as he snapped out:

"Why did you come then? Don't you know

how busy I am! Here's a desk full of papers before me. What is it? Be quick."

He had not even asked them to sit down and the colonel began to pull his mustache and breathe hard through his nostrils, in a way he had when he was beginning to be irritated at incivility.

But Harvey knew old Mix better. He was used to the airs of rich men, and knew moreover that he had no right to intrude on the general, except on sufferance.

"I'll be quick, general," he said. "The fact is I came on family matters."

The old millionaire stared.

"On family matters?" he echoed. "I'm at a loss, sir, to understand—"

"Then I'll explain myself, sir. You once had I believe a sister, Nina, who married a Mr. Somers, and afterward—"

The general's face had turned a shade paler, and he compressed his lips firmly as he waved his hand warningly.

"That will do, sir. I don't wish to hear anything about that lady. I have never given Smith, Brown & Smith any license to speak of those matters."

"Nor have they done so," returned Harvey boldly. "It was by an accident that I was drawn into this case. Of course if you don't wish to bear anything on the subject I must depart, but my employers have nothing to do with it. I represent only your niece, Miss Nina Somers."

The general had listened silently, the hard look growing harder.

When Harvey had finished he said:

"The old story, I suppose. Needs help and wants to sponge on me."

"Quite the reverse," retorted Harvey. "The young lady has money of her own since her mother's death."

The general started.

"Death, sir, did you say death?"

"I did, sir," was the cold reply.

Old Mix seemed for the time a little sobered, for he repeated:

"Death! Nina dead? When, sir?"

"Yesterday morning," answered Harvey. "Mrs. Somers was in the crush on the bridge with her daughter, and was killed. The young lady escaped alive."

General Mix seemed to be struck by the news, for it was in a tone of more civility than he said:

"Sit down, sir. Please to tell me all about it. I am obliged for your visit."

Colonel Svenson's countenance cleared, and he and Harvey sat down, while Mix went on, with a glance at the colonel:

"Your friend—?"

"Colonel Svenson. You will see how he comes into the case when I have spoken, sir. Allow me first, however, to ask a question. Did Mrs. Somers have any property in her own right at the time of her marriage?"

The old millionaire looked his haughtiest.

"Certainly, sir. I was her trustee and turned it over to her when she made her most unhappy marriage. She was old enough to be her own mistress, and to know better, for that matter. I presume most of it was squandered by that useless mendicant she married."

"May I ask the amount, sir?"

"Fifty thousand dollars in U. S. bonds, sir. I believe I have the list of numbers yet in my safe."

"Exactly, general. Well, not a penny was squandered. Mrs. Somers at her death still possessed all her bonds," said Harvey, not without some gratification.

The general seemed to be not only pleased, but a little excited by the news, for he said:

"Are you sure, sir, are you sure? Those bonds are worth a good deal of money now, you know. I bought them when gold was two-fifty and bonds'way down."

"I have reason to believe they are the same, general. Are you aware, however, that Mrs. Somers was a widow soon after her marriage, and that she married again?"

"No, sir; no, no. I tell you, after I had done my duty, I dropped all communication with my—with the lady you mention."

The general spoke crustily, but Harvey pursued:

"Yes. She was entrapped by a man called Jarvis, who married her for her money, treated her most brutally, ill-treated her daughter, Nina Somers, and behaved so badly that Mrs. Somers finally left him, fifteen years ago."

"Well, sir, well?" asked the general. "What is that to me? I'm not surprised. It was only what she had a right to expect. Be quick, sir, please. How come you into this case, and what do you want?"

"I came into the case by accident," said Harvey, "as I told you. I was on the bridge at the time of the accident, and had the good fortune to help the young lady. I took her in the absence of any female relatives of my own, to the house of my friend, Colonel Svenson, whose mother treated Miss Somers kindly. Her step-father, it seems, has found her out, and he carried her off this morning. He is a gambler, and keeps a low rum-hole in Brooklyn. He wants to get the property into his own hands, I

presume. I appeal to you as the next of kin to this unfortunate young lady to save her from ruin. That is all."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE GENERAL'S PROMISE.

GERERAL MIX listened attentively to this short story, and when it was over he asked cautiously:

"And you are absolutely certain that my niece's property is still untouched?"

"No, sir, I'm sure of no such thing," said Harvey sharply. "She and her mother lived in a small house up-town, in a poor neighborhood, and the house was entered last night and robbed."

"Robbed?" echoed the general suspiciously. "Oho! I see, I see. And you hope to palm off this sort of story on me—"

"Stop, sir, cried Harvey, starting up fiercely. "Speak another word in that tone and I go away. You know who I am well enough. If not, ask my employers. I palm off stories on no one."

The old colonel on his part sat in his chair pulling his white chin-tuft and eying the millionaire with a slight smile, as if curious to see how he would take Harvey's tone.

As it happened, it was just what was needed. The general came down instantly, saying:

"There, there, Mr.—ah—Mr. Harvey, don't get excited. I didn't mean to cast any reflections on your character—"

"But you did, sir. You distinctly accused me of telling you a false story."

"Well, I take it back then. There, there. Now tell me plainly about this. Where is this house?"

Harvey gave the street and number.

"And the robbery. Were the bonds taken?"

"Not from the house, sir. I knew of the plans of the robbers in time, and carried off the box. Here is the list of the property it contained. If you give your word to act as next of kin to the unfortunate young lady, who has no other friends, I will turn it over to you."

The general considered awhile, for he was a very cautious man.

"I'll think of it. You say you carried off the property. Where is it now?"

Harvey hesitated. To tell the general all, was to make him probably give up the whole affair in disgust.

"I am not prepared to answer that," he said. "If you consent to act as next of kin, and take care of your niece, the court will doubtless appoint you guardian. Till that is done, I am responsible to my client, Miss Somers, and no one else."

The old general screwed up his face.

"I see, I see. Very proper to be cautious. The rest of the property, what is it?"

"The furniture of the house, sir. It was not materially injured, and the police are now in charge of it."

"Very good. And my—the young lady—where is she now?"

"I have every reason to believe that she is in the power of this Buck Jarvis, in a low rum-hole in Brooklyn called the 'Retreat,' owned by this man."

The general started, muttering:

"Retreat? Retreat? Where have I?—Ob, yes. I remember now. Give me that paper, Mr. Harvey, please."

Harvey handed him a newspaper, and he turned to one of the articles.

MILITARY TACTICS EXTRAORDINARY IN THE CITY OF CHURCHES—A NICE LITTLE SHINDY.'

It was the reporter's account of the fight between the "Retreat" and "Advance," written in the most humorous style of Bohemian journalism, and full of fun.

The old gentleman bit his lips as he read, and looked up to ask:

"Is that the place where they had this fight?"

Colonel Svenson broke in with a tone of some scorn:

"My dear sir, oh no! It was not a fight. We don't call dat a fight. Just a little row for de fun of de ting. Do dey say anyt'ing of us in de affair?"

The general stared at him coldly and handed him the paper, observing dryly:

"Read for yourself. I'm not up in that kind of thing. Were you there?"

The colonel smiled.

"I t'ink ve vere. De ladee vas dere too, and we fool dat Buck Jarvis nicelee. Aha, my dear sir, but dat vill not do again."

"The affair grew out of our carrying off the young lady," said Harvey, to explain matters to the mystified old gentleman. "I hope her name is not in it; but you cannot expect such luck another time, general; and this Jarvis is just the man to claim public notice of the fact that his step daughter is a niece of yours."

The old millionaire winced.

"What had I best do?" he said nervously. "I cannot appear personally in this affair, but if you'll act for me, I will give the firm the necessary authority."

"That is all I ask," said Harvey, much relieved. "I would rather, if you please, that

the firm should not be drawn into the matter. I found out the case, and would rather appear in it alone, if you dare trust me."

Old Mix hesitated, and eyed him sharply.

"You're pretty young," he said. "I tell you fairly I shall not spend much money on this girl. I've hosts of poor relations, and I can't afford to support them."

"No one asks you to spend a cent," was the tart reply. "I don't want so much as my costs from you. The estate will stand that expense. All I want from you is authorization to appear and claim Miss Somers as next of kin. Will you give me that?"

The general eyed him still more sharply.

"Hum! Are you willing to agree in writing to trust to the estate of my late sister for your costs, if I consent to enter a formal suit?"

"I am, sir."

"Then sit down and write to that effect, and you can appear as soon as you like," said the general, rising from his desk, while Colonel Svenson gave a sigh of relief at the termination of the business, got up and began to inspect the room, while Harvey was writing out the agreement.

It was a large, handsome room, now his eyes were used to the gloom, and over the mantelpiece hung a trophy of arms, which naturally attracted the old soldier's first attention.

The general noticed him looking at them; and, seeming to be willing to be agreeable, now that he was certain there were no designs on his pocket, said affably:

"Pretty nice collection, sir. Don't you think so? Are you a judge of such things?"

The old fencing-master smiled.

"Pretty good, pretty good, my dear sir. I have arms at home myself. You have a sham Toledo dere, I see. Dey make dem in Paris."

The general colored angrily, for he was touchy on his collection.

"Sham, sir? sham? It is genuine. The only genuine one in the country."

Svenson smiled again.

"You vant to test him. I show you."

And he was actually putting up his hands to the sacred trophy, when the general cried in tones of horror:

"Good heavens, sir! what are you going to do?"

"To show you, you have a sham Toledo," was the calm reply. "I have one real one at home. You can double him up to let de point touch de hilt, and he spring back like a bell. De sham blade break every time."

"Never mind, never mind. I don't want it tried," cried Mix anxiously. "I'm satisfied, sir, quite satisfied of the genuineness of the blade. I bought it in Spain."

"Aha," responded the colonel with a shrug.

"I see, I see. Modern. Dey have lost de art. You can no more t'uv de real old Toledo, save in Spanish-America. You have been dere, sir?"

"In Mexico, yes," answered Mix with rather a contemptuous look. "I commanded a brigade in Scott's advance. Long time ago, sir."

The colonel looked at him curiously.

"Pardon; is it so? You vas a soldier? You do not look—pardon me—like von, as I have seen dem. I vas in de Mexican service after dat var. You fence, sir?"

The general smiled rather proudly.

"I used to be called the best in my class, and I never met the man I could not pink. In Paris I've beaten every one."

"Paris? eh, Paris, yes. Dey t'ink dey can fence dere," said Svenson rather contemptuously. "I do not like de French fencer. Dey have no guard, no parry. All flourish."

"I don't know what you mean," rapped out the old general, sharply. "They're universally acknowledged to be the best in the world. Do you fence, sir?"

The colonel bowed.

"I teach de art. Here is my card."

The general looked horrified, and instantly turned and walked away.

"A fencing-master!" he murmured to himself as he went. "Good heavens! what queer people one meets in this world."

Harvey looked up from the desk as the old millionaire approached and said:

"I've just finished, general. Here is your copy, signed. Will you sign the other?"

The old millionaire made no answer till he had read the agreement through carefully. Then he signed it, and said in a tone of rebuke:

"Young man, who is that person? A very queer acquaintance for you. Young men should be very cautious whom they pick up like that."

Harvey could hardly help laughing.

"He is a real gentleman, general, and quite a character. He ought to have lived in the middle ages instead of to-day, however."

The general looked sour.

"Humph! Perhaps so. Please don't bring him to my house again. I don't make friends with that sort of people."

"But for him, however," answered Harvey, stiffly, "you might have had little chance of our seeing your niece again. He rescued her from this Jarvis yesterday, and I depend on him now to a great extent. Besides, Colonel Svenson has been an officer."

Fighting Tom.

"Humph! Yes. In the Mexican service. Young man, we don't think much of that. Take my advice and drop him as soon as you can. Good-day. Send me word as the suit goes on, and I'll swear to the necessary papers."

He bowed with a frigidity about which there was no mistake, and Harvey took the hint and his departure at the same time.

Colonel Svenson took the pains to make an elaborate bow to the old millionaire, and said in his politest way:

"Ver' bappee to see you at my academie any time, general. You sit still too much. De fencing vill prolong your life, I assure you. It will make you strong man again."

The general made the slightest possible bow, and the door closed on him.

As they went out, Harvey said to his friend:

"The general doesn't think much of fencing-masters, colonel. He warned me to drop your acquaintance, or I should be sorry for it. What do you think of that, my friend?"

Colonel Svenson laughed good-humoredly.

"Is dat so? You know yv!"

"Oh, I suppose because he doesn't know anything about you."

"Not quite dat. He have a sham Toledo in his collection of arms, and I tell him of it. He vill never forgive dat. But come now. Vat ve do now, my dear friend?"

"I'm going to Jarvis's," said Harvey, firmly, "to claim Nina, and take her to her uncle."

The colonel shook his head.

"You vill not get her."

"You think not. I shall get an order from a judge, and he'll have to give her up. *Habeas corpus* can't be trifled with."

The colonel looked obstinate.

"Dat is all right, but you vill not get her."

"Why not?"

"Because dat Jarvis is no fool. He vill not take her back to de Retreat."

"You think not?"

"I am sure of it. Suppose you vas de same man, and have an heiress you know vas wanted by oder people! You keep her vere dey get her! No, you hide her. So vill dis Senor Buck. He vill hide de senorita. But ve vill get her for all dat."

Harvey compressed his lips.

"You may depend upon it we will, or I'll know the reason why."

CHAPTER XXIV.

MR. JARVIS TAKES A TRICK.

MR. JARVIS, familiarly known as "Buck," his face wreathed in a malignant smile of joy and triumph, stood with his arms akimbo, one leg crossed over the other in a graceful attitude, leaning with his back against the bar of the "Retreat," and facing the door, that same afternoon.

Mr. Blessing, the scowl gone from his face, a "schooner" of beer firmly clasped in his dexter paw, sat in a large arm-chair by a table, and observed blandly:

"Dot vas all recht, Meester Sharvis; dot vas all recht now. Here vos your fery goot 'ealt', and de petter as vas acquaintance."

"Drink hearty," responded Buck, affably. "Me and you hain't no cause to quar'l, Blessing. There's biz enough fur both, and your fellers don't interfere with mine. I tell ye it was a put up job to steal the gal, and I got her back where they won't get her again. They wouldn't never have got her if there hadn't been a muss. My boys would ha' wiped 'em out like dirt."

Mr. Blessing rapped his empty schooner on the table, as a gentle hint to Jim the bar-keeper that it needed replenishing, for the etiquette of the liquor trade requires every visitor in the same business to spend money at his rival's bar freely and reciprocally.

"Vat you haf, Meester Sharvis?" pursued Blessing, as Jim carried off the schooner, and Buck responded over his shoulder:

"Same as before, Jim."

Buck was still looking out of the door, awaiting his second glass, when Blessing saw a flickering pallor come over his host's face, and said hastily:

"Vas ist, Meester Sharvis, vas ist?"

Under his breath Buck muttered:

"By gosh, here they are again."

He saw, coming in from the street, the erect figure of Colonel Svenson, accompanied by that of the deceiving dude, Harvey, both followed by a couple of thick-set men, in whom he recognized sheriff's deputies.

The pallor on his face deepened, but he set his teeth with a desperate effort as they came in, affected not to know who they were, and said with exaggerated politeness:

"Walk in, gents, glad to see ye. Set right down. Bar-keeper will bring your orders."

The little party came in without noticing the friendly advances, and Harvey pulled out a paper which he handed to Jarvis, saying in a quiet, but stern way:

"We want Miss Somers. You resist us at your peril. You've abducted her, and her uncle has brought suit to reclaim her. Now tell me where she is, and we'll give you no further

trouble; but don't try to obstruct us, or it will be the worse for you."

The colonel and the two officers had fallen a few paces apart, watching quietly to see what would happen; but Buck merely looked at the paper without speaking.

He affected not to understand it, for he finally asked with affected innocence:

"What's this here, mister? I ain't a lawyer, and don't understand these things."

"It's a demand on you to procure the body of Nina Somers at once," said Harvey coldly. "She is up-stairs. Will you bring her down, or do you want us to search the house, and take her?"

Jarvis again looked at the paper and scratched his head in apparent perplexity.

"I don't know nothen 'bout no Nina Somers," he said. "Reckon you must ha' got hold of the wrong man, mister."

He looked so mild and innocent that Harvey could hardly believe it was the same person. The saloon was empty, except for Mr. Blessing and the bar-keeper, for it was nearly six o'clock. Mr. Blessing was glaring at Colonel Svenson in a way that showed he remembered that gentleman to his disadvantage.

For a moment Harvey was staggered, and then he said coldly:

"I think not. Your name is Jarvis, is it not?"

"Certainly, mister, my name's Jarvis, and I'd like to hear any man say a word against it," returned Buck aggressively.

Harvey waved his hand.

"Don't excite yourself. You're the man we want. You married a lady, a widow, Mrs. Somers—"

"And what if I did?" demanded Buck sourly. "What business is that of yours, I'd like to know?"

"Simply this. I want that girl. Do you refuse to give her up or not?"

"I tell yer I don't know nothen 'bout no girl," said Buck doggedly. "S'arch the house and see. But when you're through, I'll have the law o' you, see if I don't, young upstart."

Then turning to lean on the bar, he said to the bar-keeper:

"They ain't no good for drinks. Don't trust 'em till ye see the cash."

Harvey turned to the colonel.

"We shall have to go through the place," he said. "I know she's hidden somewhere. Come on, boys."

The two sheriff's officers stepped forward, but the colonel sat quietly down at a table and rapped on it, saying:

"Whisky sour! Quick! I vant talk to Meester Blessing here."

The bar-keeper looked at his employer as if to ask for orders, but Buck merely nodded, with the observation:

"Fur cash—yes."

So Jim, the bar-keeper, made the required libation and brought it to the colonel, with the curt remark:

"Fifty cents. We pay afore we drink here."

The colonel handed over a piece of silver with a smile of some contempt, saying:

"You are vat dey call a skin, I see. Fifty cent for dat! Bah! See vat I do vid it."

He took it to the door, threw it out in the street, and then came back and sat down by Blessing, to whom he said:

"Vat you take? Dis is my treat."

Blessing scowled at him. He did not know the colonel, whose slender figure and very precise attire, together with his eye-glasses, gave him the aspect of anything rather than a fighter, while the German was a large, powerful man, whose experience as a Turner made him confident of his ability to crush any ordinary man by main strength.

The young lawyer and the sheriff's deputies had gone out of the room up-stairs, and Mr. Jarvis had followed them, so that there was no one in the bar-room but the colonel, Mr. Blessing and Jim.

Mr. Blessing scowled, and replied in a surly tone:

"I trinks mit mein freunds, not mit te loafer like you. You go to plazes."

The colonel whistled softly, and became at once exceedingly polite.

"Vy, my dear friend Blessing, vat is de matter?"

Blessing curled up his lip.

"You go to plazes. You understand de Englisher sprechen? You go to plazes, or maybe you vant me your kopf to break, hein?"

As he spoke he shoved his chair away from the table, so as to face the colonel, and doubled up his fists lying on his knees, while he glowered on Svenson in an awe-inspiring way.

Mr. Blessing was evidently bent on provoking a fight if he could.

But the colonel only smiled blandly.

"Mr. Blessing, my dear friend," he said. "surely you cannot be angry with me when I saved your house yesterday from being cleaned out."

Blessing struck his fist on the table so as to make the glasses ring, vociferating:

"You go to plazes! Hein? You vas fool me und mein freunds, to morrow vas de day before;

put you can nicht nier fool disser day. I vas smash you on de shaw for five cent. You hear dat—hein?"

The colonel drew back his chair as if he were beginning to be alarmed, so as to face Blessing about six feet away.

Then he put out his hands deprecatingly.

"Mr. Blessing, my dear friend, do not be rash. You say you smash my nose for five cent?"

"Yah!" roared Blessing, rising and glaring at him. "Fer funf cent—nein, fur zwei—fur ein Potztausend! I do it for noddings. For fun I do it. Hein?"

"Mr. Blessing, my dear friend," returned the colonel, suddenly becoming grave. "You shall do it in a minute, if you can. But first let me ask. You want make money?"

Blessing hesitated. He was very angry, but the word "money" made him pause.

"You go to plazes," he repeated sullenly. "You don't got no money."

The colonel put his hand in his pocket and produced a ten-dollar gold-piece, which instantly fascinated the eyes of Blessing.

"You see dat ten dollar?" he asked.

Blessing let his hands drop.

"Yah, I see him. Vell?"

The colonel smiled blandly.

"I give you dat ten dollar you smash my nose, Meester Blessing," he said, sweetly.

As he spoke he rose and dropped the hand which held the coin behind him, facing the German with a provoking smile.

Blessing, seeing that he was being laughed at, colored up furiously and rushed to the attack at once.

He was no boxer, as any one could see, but depended on his great strength to clutch his enemy with one hand while he pommelled him with the other.

He drew back his right hand behind his head, to hit down like a hammer, held out his left to clutch, and came lumbering on, a good two hundred and fifty pounds of flesh.

He had almost clutched, when the colonel slipped to one side, and Blessing brought his formidable fist down on empty air.

Colonel Svenson, with a bowing motion of the head that looked quite easy and deliberate, had ducked under his left arm and come up on the other side, when he dealt the stout German a kick in the rear, crying as he did so:

"Meester Blessing, my dear friend, do not get excited. It is bad for de digestion."

Then he was away, laughing, and Blessing, furious at the exhibition made of him, wheeled round and came at him again, with both huge arms going like the sails of a windmill, while he spluttered out his German curses, and, could he have once got hold of the active colonel, might have made him suffer.

Jim, the bar-keeper, looked on from behind the bar with placid indifference, for he had had enough fighting the day before, but he had his hands on the base-ball club he kept for emergencies, in case either of the combatants should damage the saloon.

Colonel Svenson never so much as lifted his hands when the infuriated Blessing rushed at him, but watched him as he came, and with another light movement evaded his rush and administered a second kick, which made the German almost crazy with fury.

The third rush was made with more of deliberation and design, so as to hem the foe into a corner, when Blessing shouted:

"Now I got you! Potztausend! Donnerwetter!"

With that he advanced, with outstretched arms to either side, intent only on clutching an antagonist whom he regarded as puny but quick, and forgetting entirely any guard for face or body.

Colonel Svenson fell back slowly, tripping from side to side, as if intent only on getting out of the German's clutch, laughing all the time, and flourishing his hat in one hand, while he showed the gold-piece with the other.

"Ten dollar, Mr. Blessing, my dear friend, if you smash my nose. Ten dollar you cannot do it. Ah! go sit down!"

A sudden change had come over the scene in those four words.

Svenson had reached the wall, and Blessing, thinking his capture a certainty at last, had swooped down on him.

In that moment the old fencing master crouched to half his former height, as the German's huge paws almost clutched him, and Blessing stooped after him.

The stoop was only for one instant, the next Svenson rose with a grunt of extreme exertion, and sent his head full butt into that portion of Mr. Blessing's body where "the contents of the thorax and abdomen (in medical phrase) are divided from each other by the membrane of the diaphragm."

In other words, he took him "in the wind" or what boxers call the "mark," with a force compounded of two meeting bodies, and Mr. Blessing instantly obeyed the order given him.

"Oh! sit down!"

He DID sit down, with a concussion that shook the whole house, and his face became of the color of chalk instantly.

Then he sunk all into a heap, curled up on the floor, groaning dismally and gasping for breath, while the colonel calmly arranged his rumpled hair, put on his hat, and said to his fallen foe in the sweetest way:

"Meester Blessing, my dear friend, I have leetle bit advice to give you. Keep your guard down on de mark. It is bad place to be hit."

Then he turned on the bar keeper with a scowl that entirely changed the look of his face as he said:

"You put dat club down, or I take it from you and break your back."

Jim turned pale and dropped it saying:

"I bain't got no club, sir."

"See you do not find it," answered the colonel, shaking his finger at him. "I am man dat play with those things. Now you make me noder whisky sour. I paid you for two. Vat you take me for? I know de price."

"Certainly, certainly, general," replied Jim, hurriedly, and he made up the seductive mixture, while Blessing still sat, curled up and groaning, on the floor.

The colonel sat and sipped his drink till Blessing managed to crawl up to his feet and totter out of the saloon, all bent up, and went away.

As he departed, Svenson observed:

"Dat vas foolish man, my friend. You take lesson by him. Never try hit man, you do not know you can lick him."

Jim gave a rueful grin.

"I ain't likely to hit you."

"I t'ink not, my friend," answered Svenson, dryly.

Then he heard steps on the stairs, and Harvey came down with his men, looking gloomy, while Buck Jarvis wore a sneer of badly concealed triumph on his features, and the young man said shortly:

"You were right and I was wrong, colonel. She's not here."

The colonel got up from the table and came to Buck Jarvis, at whom he looked keenly.

"Dis is Meester Sharvis?" he said politely.

Buck sneered openly.

"Yes, this is Buck Jarvis. What d'ye make of that now?"

The colonel smiled.

"Nothing now, sare. But you did me de honor to come to my place to-day—"

"I didn't do no such thing," returned Buck evading his eye. "I tell ye, ye've got hold of the wrong man."

The colonel shrugged his shoulders.

"You are very prudent. You know vat I would do to you if you vas dat man?"

Buck tried to sneer again.

"I dunno. You might get sucked in at it."

The colonel shook his finger at him.

"I would give you licking you nevair forget, sare. You mind dat. Take care you do not meet me some day, ven dere is no officer round. I teach you come to my place ven I am avay."

Then, without another word, he marched out of the saloon, followed by his friends.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE O'GRADYS' SHINDY.

MURDERER'S ROW was unusually quiet that night, though the houses were lighted up as usual and plenty of women were to be seen gossiping on doorsteps or gadding from house to house to hold mysterious conclaves in whispers.

But something was missing.

Usually the houses were full of noise and shouting, while the three saloons which flourished on the community resounded to the strains of pianos and violins, to which the frequenters danced all night at times.

This night hardly a man was to be seen, and every now and then the glitter of a policeman's buttons showed one of the knights of the locust patrolling the place, where, till that day, no "cop" had dared show himself.

There were only three or four of them; but the careless confident way in which they walked showed that they had plenty of help within call and, as a matter of fact, one of the houses which was distinguished from the rest by being dark, contained the whole reserve of the precinct, waiting for the reappearance of the regular residents of the row, while Captain Samuels kept a buggy running to and from the station-house, to overlook the matter in person, and capture the ringleaders if he could, so as to "break up the gang."

Captain Samuels was a young and ambitious officer, who had set his heart on distinguishing himself by exterminating the desperadoes that had so long terrorized over his colleague, Jones, in the next precinct, and he had set his heart also on capturing the tin box of bonds which Harvey asserted to have been stolen by an unknown man in police garb, though the captain thoroughly disbelieved the story, and hoped to find the box in Murderer's Row.

It was, therefore, with some irritation and considerable contempt that he greeted Harvey, who walked into the station-house that evening, a little after dusk, accompanied by Colonel Svenson.

"Well, gentlemen," he said, "I suppose

you've made up your mind to do the sensible thing at last, and make your complaint against this Buck Jarvis for the assault. I told you you'd have to do it."

"On the contrary," returned Harvey, "we have called to notify you that we are going to occupy the house of Mrs. Somers to-night, and that we shall require no police protection."

Samuels stared contemptuously.

"What? You? Didn't you get enough last night? Why, man, if I withdraw my men, it will be known in ten minutes, and they'll come back in a flock and double-bank you."

"Then why not let them come?" observed Harvey, "and make a swoop, near morning. You're not likely to capture any one, if you don't."

The captain scowled.

"Pr'aps you'd like my place, sir? I guess that the commissioners are satisfied with the way I carry on this precinct. I was not asking your advice."

Harvey shrugged his shoulders.

"As you please. Good-evening."

He was walking out of the station-house when the captain said sneeringly:

"Suppose I took my men off as you suggest. Probably you feel competent to take care of yourself in that house."

"If I did not, I should not go there," returned Harvey coldly, as he walked out with Svenson, and he took his way quietly past Murderer's Row, where he noticed the police patrolling and women eying them furtively from the doors.

The colonel said nothing till they had passed the place, when he observed:

"Dey vill get no one to-night. Dat captain he vill not 'do vat any one say but himself. He is hombre insympatetic, muy insympatico."

The colonel, who had lived much in Spanish America, from whence his mother came, though his father was a Dane, had a way of lapsing into Spanish occasionally, and a great dislike for what he called "unsympathetic men," by which he meant disagreeable ones.

"For all dat," he continued, "if I mistake not, he vill follow your advice."

"How do you mean?"

"He will withdraw his men after dark, on purpose to give you trouble."

Harvey's face contracted in a frown.

"Let him do it. We can take care of ourselves."

He had been very gloomy and taciturn since Buck Jarvis had outwitted him by taking Nina cut of his reach, and had come here to the house from whence the girl had cov'e the day before, with a vague hope of finding some trace of the missing box of bonds.

The colonel had rather encouraged him in the idea of going; but now he said gravely:

"Meester 'Arvie, my dear friend, you must not hope for much to-night. I have idea dat ve shall not find much."

"Probably not," returned Harvey gloomily; "but at least it is my last night of liberty. I must go back to the office to-morrow, and if I don't find anything to-night, I must give up the whole thing, I suppose."

"You are right, my dear friend. You are young man yet and cannot afford waste time. It is a pitee, I adm'r, dat sweet young ladie; but it is no business of ours. We must mind our own affairs. Here is de house."

They came to the little house at the end of the row, and went in by means of the key that Harvey carried, finding everything the same as it had been when they left it in the morning.

The policeman in charge seemed to be glad to be relieved, and went away, bidding them good-night, when the colonel observed:

"Now, my dear friend, we are here. Vat you going to do?"

"To wait till all's quiet and I hear the rap of that man they call the 'Night Walker.' Then I propose to go out and follow him up. He has that box, whoever he is."

The colonel nodded his head wisely.

"I see, I see. Uncle Joe's story run in your head still. You t'ink—"

"I think that this man, whichever he is, must be crazy; and the fact of his wearing a police uniform, or part of one, makes me think he must be Jake Vielenburg. Who else can it be? He was crazy and to the last remained fond of the old uniform. What more natural than that he should have a recollection of the place where he was last conscious, and haunt it?"

The colonel seemed struck by the idea.

"You have de logic of it, my dear friend. I admit it may be possible. But if so, how is it de oder policeman do not know him?"

Harvey looked at his companion keenly.

"Are you sure they don't know him? I have an idea they do."

The colonel shook his head.

"You are wrong, my dear friend."

"What makes you think so?"

"They would have him long ago."

"But they might not be able to catch him."

"De people of Murderer's Row would have found him out."

"Perbaps they have too."

"What make you say dat?"

"Well, I noticed that they seemed to be much

excited about his rapping that night, but Miss Somers said that they were all used to it, and that the noise in Murderer's Row ceased every night about the time that he began his raps."

The colonel shrugged his shoulders.

"Dat was superstition. None so full of dat as de criminal. Dey laugh at de law of man, and try defy de law of God, but dey believe it all de same, and dey shake ven someting make dem t'ink of de next world."

"Perbaps you may be right," said Harvey, in a thoughtful way. "At all events I have a strange feeling that we shall find out something about that box to-night."

They went through the house again, and saw that it was in good condition to resist any assault if such were to be feared.

"But dey vill not come," observed Svenson. "It is not de same as last night."

"I should say not. Then I was alone, and had no weapon. By the ty, colonel, poor Kate O'Donnell lost your revolver for you."

"Dat is all one. I get him back."

"Get him back. How?"

"From dat Jarvis. I have not done with him yet, 'Arvie, my dear friend. You hear vat I tell him? I mean it."

And the old warrior looked dangerous, in a way he had sometimes, as different as could be from his usual placid, smiling appearance.

"I get dat pistol from him. It is like him to come here to-night, and dey vill not know I am here. Dat is why I came, my friend."

"I thought you come to help me, colonel."

"Dat? Yes. But also to help myself. You do not know me yet, my friend. Dat man he go to my house ven I was away and he frightened de señora. I have not punish him yet, but I do so, I do so. You see."

"Then you think he will come here to-night?"

The colonel laughed.

"Mr. 'Arvie, my dear friend, you are young. I am old sport. I discount you in know de tricks of de villain. Yes, he vill come. I told you, you would not see de señora to-day. He has bide her avay. But he vill not keep her so very long."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean be want de money, not her. If he do not get de money, he vill give her up. Vat does be vant vid a lady?"

Harvey felt a thrill of joy for the first time.

"Do you think so really?"

"I know it. Put youself in his place. You vas a scamp like dat—pardon I mean suppose you vas—vat you vant vid a girl dat cry all de time, dat is not use to work, dat onlee vant to get away? You say, let her go. So vill he."

"But if he finds the money?"

"Aba, my friend, dat is different. Den be say I keep de girl and de money too. My dear friend, you pray dat ve find dat monev, if you hope to see de señora again."

"I certainly do, colonel, but I'd rather see her than the money any time."

"So would not I, my dear friend. You are very young man. I have seen de world. I say cut de money ver' good; ver' good to keep de house. But ve vill not get it to night."

"Why do you think so?"

The colonel winked at him.

"Too many police round," he said, in a low tone. "Dey go avay, ve have chance." Vat you say? You have a cigar. Ve have nothing to do till de time come ven he is ap."

They lighted their cigars, and the colonel proposed to go up on the roof of the house, which was nearly flat.

"Ve see vat go on. Ve hear de noise. Maybe ve have chance even to-night," he said.

They went up on the roof and bid themselves behind a chimney.

All was quite quiet round them, and as they began their watch the city clocks were striking nine and the last flush of sunset was dying away in the west.

They were on comparatively high ground, and could see the North river by the glimmer over the tops of the houses toward the riverbank, while on the other side, over the dark empty lots, stretched the lines of sewer pipes, like chimneys, and beyond them rose the steep rocks of Shantytown, just where the work of the blasters who had cut the streets had left them for the O'Grady's and Fitzgeralds.

Lights twinkled from the shanties, dotting the rocks, and the shrill cries of women calling to their children to come in and go to bed came down at intervals.

On the side toward the river Murderer's Row stood, full of twinkling lights, but all was quiet there, so quiet that the colonel remarked:

"De police have not gone. We have no luck till they go, my friend."

Harvey was soon lured in a pleasant dream as he listened to the distant noises from Shantytown.

There was something so picturesque in the irregular crogs, crowned with cottages, something so unlike the rest of New York city, that it took his fancy at once.

"I shouldn't wonder," he said thoughtfully, "if those poor people there live quite happily in their way, in these shanties."

The colonel puffed out some smoke.

"Ay, ay, it is like de old countree, de rock

Fighting Tom:

and de goat, and de pig and sticken. Dey boppe in deir vay; but I no like de vay. Aba, vat is dat? A fight!"

There was a loud shout from the top of one of the masses of rock, and a thundering noise in one of the shanties, as if horses were stamping in a stable; and within two minutes they heard a tremendous racket up on one of the rocks that had looked the picture of pastoral happiness a little before. Men were shouting, women screaming, and the sound of blows, with the rattling of showers of stones announced that a free fight was going on.

The colonel chuckled to himself.

"Dat is vat Joe call de Irishers. Dey cannot be happy without a fight. Look at de other rock. Dey will catch the fever too. You see."

In fact, no sooner had the row begun on one of the square masses of rock that were left by the streets, sixty feet below, than lights were to be seen moving on the top of a neighboring mass, and pretty soon derisive bowls could be heard, as if one set of shanty people were taunting the other.

Harvey could not help laughing at the way in which the affair had sprung into being all at once, and said to Svenson:

"It is the Fitzgeralds and the O'Gradys, I'll bet. There's an old feud between them. I wonder if it will end in a real fight."

Their doubts were soon set at rest by the apparition of a number of moving lights on the summits of both masses of rocks; as if the people were running out with candles, and there they stood either side at the brink of a sixty foot precipice, calling out abusive epithets to each other across the ravine that was called a street, while the rattles of stones told that they were trying the effect of missile warfare on each other.

"They can't do much harm, that far," said Harvey after watching them.

"Do not be too sure," replied Svenson; "dey throw stone well, dose men. Some one will be hit hard, and den dey come to de close quarter. You see."

They watched, and heard the angry hubbub on the rock growing louder and louder every moment.

In the faint twilight that still remained they caught glimpses of showers of stones arching their way through the air like swarms of flies, and after every such volley rose a tremendous yell of triumph on one side, or anger on the other.

The colonel watched the contest with the cool impartiality of a veteran spectator, and every now and then glanced back at Murderer's Row.

"If dat go on much longer," he said in a thoughtful way, "Captain Samuels may solve de problem for us."

"Solve what problem?"

"How to get rid of de police."

"You mean—"

"I mean he must go dere with his men. It is de duty of de police to stop de fight, is it not? He cannot evade it ven he have a whole platoon here. Aba, I thought so. Here come some one now."

"The sound of horse's feet on the cobblestones, and the rattle of a buggy came up the street from Murderer's Row, while several men came trotting along on the sidewalk.

The watchers looked down and presently saw Captain Samuels pass by at a slow trot looking up at the shanties, evidently undecided what to do, while three of his men were keeping pace with him, as if awaiting instructions.

A little beyond the house the buggy pulled up, and the row on the opposite rocks grew louder than ever, the voices of the women predominating.

Presently they heard Samuels say:

"Guess there's no bones broken yet, boys. No harm as long as they keep at that distance."

The words were hardly out of his mouth when a bright flash lit up the summit of one of the rocks, and the report of a gun came echoing down on them, followed by a howl of rage from the other rock. Then:

"Bang! BANG! BANG!"

Three guns went off, and the lights on the tops of the rocks began to stream away and descend the declivities on each side.

Captain Samuels instantly placed a whistle to his lips and sounded three long, trembling notes, saying hurriedly to his men:

"Come on, boys. We can't fool any longer. The reserve will come up before it gets too hot for us. Get out your pistols, but don't use them till I fire."

Then away went the buggy at a sharp trot, the three policemen following, and Harvey heard the heavy, regular tramp of a number of men coming at the slow trot known as the "double quick," from the direction of Murderer's Row. It was the reserve platoon going to quell the riot of the O'Gradys and the Fitzgeralds.

Meantime, the lights were streaming down the rocks of the rival factions, and had quite reached the street when the platoon passed the house.

From that moment the opposing shouts were lost in one common hubbub of yells and oaths,

with an occasional pistol-shot; but these latter were so few that the colonel remarked:

"Dey are not rich enough to have firearm. So much de better. Aha! dere go de cops at last."

At that moment the row trebled its volume, and a volley of shots were fired by the police.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HIDING AWAY.

BOTH watchers started at the sound of the volley, but the colonel, after a moment, said to Harvey:

"Dey fire in de air. Hark! de noise is not stop. It grow worse."

In fact, the noise grew louder than ever, and the lights had disappeared from the street below, while on the rocks above a number of figures could be seen hanging over the brink of the precipice, while the rattle of stones could be plainly heard above the yelling.

Presently Harvey thought he could see more figures flying over the dark lots between him and the high rocks, and the colonel exclaimed, holding his hand to his ear:

"De police get de worst of it."

"How do you know, colonel?"

"Listen—yes—I am sure."

Harvey could not understand how his companion reasoned in the dark, when nothing was visible.

"How in the world can you tell?" he asked.

"It grows darker every minute."

The colonel held up his hand.

"Listen. De ear is better dan de eye in a case like dis. Dey do not fire any more. De mob have closed with them, and you will see dem come soon."

They listened intently, and before long the colonel added:

"De police have fought their way out on de oder side. De station is nearer. Hark!"

Another volley; this time more distant, and the flashes not to be seen, convinced Harvey that the colonel was right.

It was followed by a wild yell of joy and triumph from the shanty people, and Svenson said in a serious way:

"Meester 'Arvie, my dear friend, dis is not healt'y countree for us. You know dat?"

Harvey started.

"Why not?" he asked, somewhat disturbed.

"De shantee people have beat de police, and dey vill be wild," said the colonel gravely. "Dat captain t'ink he know too much. He t'row away his men."

"But surely the police won't stay beaten?"

"No, no, my friend. To-morrow dey vill come again in de big force, and it vill be bad for de shantees. But in de mean time it is de night, and we are alone, and dose men vill come down here. You see?"

"What shall we do, then?"

"My dear friend, you know vat de soldier do ven he cannot fight!"

"Runs away, you mean?"

"Dat is it. We run away."

"But where, colonel?"

"Hark! vat is dat?"

The trample of many feet at a run coming across the lots toward Murderer's Row, and the two men shrunk into the shadow of the chimney to watch.

Presently they heard low voices, like those of men out of breath talking to each other, and several men passed at a run, in scattered groups.

On they went till some dozen had passed, and then they began to slack up and walk, when some one called out:

"Divil a hurry, b'yes. We've all night to ourselves. Hurroo for the O'Gradys!"

"Hurroo for the Fitzgeralds!" shouted a second voice. "Bedad, it's a poor fist ye'd have made of it widout us."

"Arrab, be 'asy, honey?" cried a third voice. "Isn't it ould Ireland ag'in' the cops? We're all Irish, and to blazes wid de Yankee men!"

The sentiment seemed to meet with such general approval that it started a loud cheer, which grew in volume as the men in rear took it up, and Harvey whispered:

"Why are they coming here? There's a crowd all the way back to the rocks."

The colonel seemed doubtful.

"I do not know," he said. "Listen and we will find out."

Presently they saw quite a little crowd on the way, all the men talking together, and one man called out:

"Hey, Mickey—Mickey!"

"What's the mather?" cried another.

"Where are ye goin', b'yes?" said the first.

"Over to Tim Maginnis's to drink him dry, and devil resave the cint he'll git from this crowd."

The sally provoked a laugh, and the colonel whispered to Harvey:

"I know now."

"What is it then?"

"Dey go to Maginnis. He is de alderman of de Ward, and keep a big brewery near de station-house."

"And they're going there? What for?"

Svenson shrugged his shoulders.

"It is de Irish nature. Dey want triumph

over de police; dat is all. Perhaps dey want another fight. I do not envy de police dey meet."

Here a loud shout down the row caught their attention, and the men in front of the house stopped to listen:

The shout became plainer.

"Cop! cop! Kill the c'p!"

The men in front caught up the cry and rushed on, when the colonel said:

"Now, my friend, is our time. We go off in de confusion."

"But why not stay here?"

"Because it is not safe, my friend."

"But no one sees us."

"You do not know how long before dey will see us. Dis look to me like put-up job, my dear friend."

"What does?"

"Dis fight. I t'ink ve hear from Meester Sharvis pretty soon."

"What makes you think so, colonel?"

"I have de logic of it, my friend. Dat fight could not be better for de t'ief and villain of Murderer's Row. Dey want get rid of de police, and dey get dese Irish to pull de nut from de fire. But dat is not all. Dese Irish get drunk very soon, and den dey go to all sort of mischief. Dey come back home, and set fire to house for fun. It is like de riot Joe tell off. Dey are like wild men with the liquor."

Harvey hesitated. The row down the street had subsided into silence, and he said:

"They seem to be going off. I don't like to leave here. It's a good place to watch from."

"It is a good place, as you say; but I tell you I t'ink dis is put-up job. Jarvis he is coming here to look for dat box, as you are. He is sure to come to dis house. You see?"

"Ah! that indeed I did not think of. You are right, colonel; let us go."

They softly closed the scuttle and went down the stairs below.

Then Harvey said dubiously:

"I swear, I don't know what to do next or where to go. Where shall we find any place to hide ourselves?"

The colonel laid his hand on the young man's arm, saying:

"Will you trust me?"

"Certainly, colonel."

"I am old sport. I have been in dis sort of t'ing before. I take you out safe. And I tell you, my friend, you vill want your wits to-night. Follow me."

They went out of the back door into the little garden-plot and listened before leaving the place for the open lots.

Distant voices could be heard all round them, and the population of Shantytown was evidently in a state of great excitement.

The colonel beckoned to Harvey and they went softly out and stole across the lots.

They could see moving figures against the sky in all directions if they stooped down low, but the colonel whispered:

"Do not stop. Let them think we are some of their friends. If we come on any of them in the dark, do as I do."

They stole on a little further, when they saw two men approaching, whom they could not evade without being seen.

"Have you de knuckle on?" whispered the colonel to his friend.

Harvey nodded.

"Let me do de talk," added the colonel, and they walked on as carelessly as they could to the two men, who were talking as they came on to meet them.

"Hello, Mike! Is that yerself?" asked one of the men, to which Svenson replied:

"Hurry up or ye'll be late. Dey go through de houses down dere."

"Who is it?" asked one of the men, and the two came up close to peer at them, when the colonel and Harvey, without warning, suddenly struck up from the hip at the two strangers, taking them in the face.

The effect of the blows was sudden.

Both men dropped as if they had been shot, and the colonel observed:

"'Arvie, my dear friend, you do honor to my lesson. I hit no better prop myself."

"But they'll come to in a minute," said the young man in a low tone as the colonel was passing on.

"You follow," was the sharp reply.

Then as they went on at the same pace the colonel added in explanation:

"Dey vill be stupid some time, and it is dark. Dey vill not know where to look for us. Hit and get away. Dat is de whole logic of it, my friend."

A few moments later they came to a little hollow in the midst of the lots, and the old warrior suddenly threw himself down, an example followed by Harvey.

"Chut!" he whispered.

Then they lay still, and Harvey had time to look around and listen.

They were in a little hollow not over six feet square and about two and a half feet deep, which had probably once been occupied by a huge boulder.

The blasters, when they opened the streets, had taken the pains to drill and break up this

boulder, and the fragments lay all round the hole of various sizes.

About twenty feet off rose one of the tall chimney-like sewer-pipes, and they could see the others in a line stretching either way to the rocks and toward the river.

Harvey did not ask why his companion had stopped, for he began to see that the old warrior understood the situation far better than he did himself.

Presently they heard voices approaching, and Harvey could not help a start as he recognized the tones of Buck Jarvis.

"I tell ye, boys," he was saying, "no cops won't be here to-night, but they'll be in lively in the mornin'. What's to be done has got to be done to-night."

"And what is to be done?" asked another voice that Harvey knew not.

"We've got to find that box," replied Buck. "I made the gal own up her snoozer had got it, and I reckon he's a-tryin' to fool her 'bout it, too."

"Why?" asked the other man.

The voices were so close that Harvey turned his head and saw three figures skirting the broken fragments of rock toward Murderer's Row, as if they knew the way.

"Tried to make her believe a man stole it," answered Buck, indignantly. "I know what he's done. He's hid it away somewhere in the house, and I'm going through it again."

Svenson squeezed Harvey's arm to call his attention to the words and as Buck passed on, whispered:

"You see what I tell you? He has come."

"What shall we do?" whispered back Harvey.

The colonel's only reply was to flatten himself out again, with another squeeze, for more voices approached.

"We are in de good place," he whispered at last, almost inaudibly, as the voices got loud in disputing, and very soon afterward a group of about a dozen men came on stumbling over the broken rocks, cursing and quarreling.

"I tell ye it was a Fitzgerald that laid out the first cop."

"Arrah, ye make my toe ache!"

"What are ye givin' us. It was Tom O'Grady mashed his head wid a rock."

"And didn't I see Maurice Fitzgerald hit him wid the stick meself?"

"It was after he was down."

"And what's that got to do wid it?"

"Sure he finished the spaldeen."

It was the rival clans disputing over the victory and the quarrel terminated in one man falling over a sharp piece of rock, yelling:

"Bad luck to the O'Gradys and all the rest of them! OW!!!"

Then there was a laugh at his expense and another man cried:

"And it's Mike Fitzgerald that's got a hard shin, so he has. Luke how he split the rock, b'yee."

"It's all full of 'em. Come this-a-way," cried another man, and the group cheered off, to Harvey's relief, for he thought they were coming right on top of him.

"We are in de track," said the colonel. "We hear all as well as in de house. Keep still. I have an idea."

"What is it?" asked Harvey, after a pause, during which silence prevailed.

The colonel turned his head.

"You see dose sewer-pipe," he said.

"Certainly. What of them?"

"Dey make a good place to bide. No one would think of looking for us dere."

"But how should we get in and out?"

"We get in easy enough. Dey are but six feet high here. To get out. Dat is more difficult, but I see a way."

Harvey looked at them doubtfully. He had heard of men hiding in sewers before, but only in those of Paris which are large enough for a man to stand up in. The New York sewers up-town are made of three-foot pipes.

A man in an emergency might crawl through them if they were empty, but the prospect was not a pleasant one.

"Let us wait, colonel," he said. "If the worst comes to the worst we can do it."

The colonel laughed almost inaudibly.

"You do not admire de prospect? No more do I, my friend. But I tell you I have an idea. If dat crazee man live here dere is de place we find him."

Harvey started as his friend spoke.

"By heavens, I believe you're right!" he said.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE NIGHT WALKER.

For some time after this they lay still in the little hollow, groups of men passing by on their way to the spree at Maginnis's, till the stream slackened, and after what seemed to Harvey a long time, both men were startled by the solemn tones of the clocks striking all over the city.

They counted the strokes, and Harvey uttered a smothered exclamation.

"By Jove! Eleven o'clock! I didn't think we had been here over an hour."

The colonel lifted his head cautiously.

"It is time we move," he said; "I think we have no more visitors."

Harvey was just rising, when his friend clutched his arm again, and sunk down.

A slight noise near them had attracted the vigilant veteran's notice.

Harvey heard it, too; and they lay still, unable to account for it.

It sounded like something clinking on hollow earthenware, and came from some little distance off.

It ceased, and then began again; and at last the colonel clutched Harvey's arm, and pointed to one of the sewer-pipes.

"It is dere," he whispered. "You were right—de man is alive."

Harvey, much excited, was about to rise again, when the colonel pulled him down.

"Quiet," he said. "It is our only chance."

They lay perfectly still again, but the noise ceased entirely.

Harvey was watching the sewer pipes eagerly, when he saw a head rise out of the fourth chimney above him, and he in turn pulled the colonel and pointed to it.

Svenson nodded, and they watched.

Presently the figure of a man was seen to emerge slowly from the chimney.

At first came only the head and shoulders, and these remained still for some time.

The head turned round from side to side, as if watching and listening, but no other motion was perceptible.

The sound of voices from Murderer's Row came down the breeze, and instantly the head disappeared in the chimney.

"It is the same man!" whispered Harvey, in great excitement. "It must be. What a strange life to lead! He must be crazy. In a sewer!"

"De sewer is emptee up here, my friend," answered the colonel. "Dey make dem for de future here. De shantee do not emptee into dem, and dere is no house. Dat is all dry pipe up here."

The voices died away, and after a long interval of silence the head came into sight again out of the chimney.

Presently the figure of a man, as far as the waist, emerged, and the man finally sat down on the edge of the big pipe, and looked round him.

A moment later they saw him throw his legs over and drop down on the earth outside.

Then he disappeared entirely, and Harvey was puzzled what had become of him, till he caught sight of a skulking figure, flitting from pipe to pipe, toward the rocks of Shantytown.

The colonel rose up at last.

"We see where he go," he said.

They got into the line of the pipes, and followed the flitting figure, which was perfectly noiseless in its passage.

A little while later they heard voices again, and looking back toward the house they had left so opportunely, saw that it was all lighted up, the windows wide open, and that Buck Jarvis, and three men with him, were turning things upside down, and throwing them out of the windows at times.

The colonel shook his finger at the house and said quietly:

"Aba, Meester, Jarvis, it is your turn for to-night. You wait a leetle."

Just at that moment came a sound that startled them, and they saw that it made the ruffians in the house start too; for they stopped what they were doing, and stood still to listen.

It was the loud, clear ring of a locust club on a stone, echoing through the dark stillness for many a block.

It was followed by deep silence, and then the two watchers saw the men in the house rush to the lights, which went out in a few moments.

"Aha," said Svenson. "Wat did I tell you? De superstition is powerful, is it not?"

The two watchers shrunk close into the shadow of the big sewer-pipes and waited.

The sound of that club seemed to have caused a deep silence to fall on everything.

Then as they looked to the summit of the rocks of Shantytown, they saw lights flitting about, and heard women calling to each other.

Presently came another sound, that of men running in haste over the empty lots, and the colonel pulled Harvey down.

"This way, boys," cried the tones of Buck Jarvis, evidently much excited. "I tell ye it's all a skin game. It's no cop."

He was coming straight toward them and the colonel and Harvey began to nerve themselves up to a new struggle, when the attention of all was again diverted.

"Rap! Rap! Rap!"

The sound of the old locust again came to their ears from another direction, and Buck Jarvis and his party stopped and listened, whispering among themselves, not twenty feet from the hidden men.

"Ra! Rap! Rap!"

A third time came the sounds, and Jarvis cried out:

"This way! I'll get him yet."

Away he went with his friends, and the colonel drew a long breath.

"I am glad dat man is gone," he said.

Harvey could not help a smile.

"I can't say I'm sorry myself," he answered; "for we should have had a fight with no sense about it."

The colonel shook his head.

"It was not dat."

"Indeed!"

"No, it was not dat. We could handle dose men, eassee enough."

"Then why, colonel?"

"You see, my friend, it is dark night."

"Yes, what of that?"

"And dis Jarvis do not know me."

"So much the worse for him."

"No. I do not mean dat either."

"What do you mean then?"

"You see, my friend, we cannot afford to fight to-night. We must drop every one we meet, and make no noise."

"Well, colonel?"

"And I have to slug dat Jarvis, so he never know who hit him."

"What of that?"

The colonel's answer was given in a tone of some hesitation.

"Ven I lick dat man I want daylight to let him see what bit him. I want to give him a chance. I do not care to lick man dat do not fight back. My dear friend, I am very glad we do not meet dat Jarvis. I want to lick him properly, properly. And by de seven Roosan gods I do it in de right way when I see him in de right place, my dear friend."

Then he stood up by the sewer-pipe and listened, for the mysterious raps came a fourth time from the direction in which Jarvis had gone.

A moment later came a fearful yell like that of a wild beast and the sound of a blow that echoed with a duller crack than that of the locust on a stone. It was followed by the sound of shouts and curses, with several pistol-shots, and very soon after they saw three figures running swiftly across the empty lots.

The rearmost was a man of gigantic stature, and he seemed to be pursuing the other two, who were fleeing for their lives.

The big man gained on them, and Harvey saw him raise a club.

Yes, it was a real club, and it fell on the fugitive's head with a sickening thud, while the poor fellow dropped like a log.

The other man stopped short, turned in his tracks and they saw the flash! flash! of two shots from a pistol.

The big man dropped at the first shot, leaped up again at the second, and they saw him throw his club.

There was another dull thud, followed by the same wild-beast yell they had heard before, as the big man sprung forward once more and the fugitive fell.

They saw him stoop over the man who had fired, pick up his club and deal the fallen one another sickening blow.

Harvey drew in his breath with a sense of pain, whispering:

"Heavens what a smash!"

Colonel Svenson on the other hand, seemed to be delighted, for he whispered:

"Well done, well done! Dat man know how to hit. It must be Jake."

But neither of them cared to go out of the shadow of the sewer-pipes, and they were curious to see what this unknown man would do, and whether he were indeed the mad policeman of Uncle Joe's story.

They saw him stoop over the body, and then he rose up, muttering something to himself that they could not distinguish, and went toward the very place where they had been hiding in the hollow but a little time before.

He stood there by one of the rocks, and slowly sounded his club three times.

The mystery of the raps was no longer a mystery now at all events.

The man before them had made them.

But who was the man?

Uncle Joe's story gave Harvey a clew to it, but he had no idea whether it would also prove a clew to the discovery of the lost box.

If this maniac—if he were a maniac—had taken the box, where had he hidden it?

As if to answer his question, the colonel, who stood by his side, whispered:

"I know, I know."

"What?" asked Harvey.

"Why de captain do not know of him. He only come out in de night, and he live in de sewer all de day. He has a cave somewhere in it. He have your box dere, if it be anywhere. We find it when it rain."

"Why when it rains?" asked Harvey.

"Chut!" was the only answer.

The maniac-policeman, for such they had settled in their minds he must be, stood by the broken rock after he had sounded his club, listening; and presently they heard him chuckle to himself.

Then he sunk down among the rocks and they saw no more traces of him.

He seemed to have vanished, as if the earth had swallowed him up.

Pretty soon after, they heard voices coming toward them, and spied another group of men, seven or eight in number, coming cautiously toward the place.

They seemed to be afraid lest they should run into some trap, for they halted frequently, and presently some one said:

"Begorra, it was here I h'ard the thafe of the world. Get yer rocks ready, b'yess, to give it to 'em. Whin ye see a head, hit it, be jabers!"

The colonel pulled Harvey down behind the sewer-pipe, but as the young man went down, his sharp eyes caught sight of the tall figure of the maniac policeman.

Not where he had disappeared. Somehow or other he had crept away from there, and Harvey saw him now *behind the last man of the group*, crouching and coming forward like a wild beast, no one seeing him. The foremost Irishman was near the broken stones and the little hollow, when again came that awful wild beast yell, and the maniac giant, with the spring of a tiger, was into the midst of them, *a club in each hand*.

"Crack! crack! crack! crack!"

The blows came with the precision and force of an engine, and in another minute the Irishmen, completely demoralized, were running and tumbling into the hole over the jagged rocks left by the blasters.

The giant leaped after them and they saw him striking right and left at the struggling men, while they roared at the top of their lungs for mercy.

Only one got away toward Murderer's Row in safety, and the big man jumped out of the hole and gave utterance to the first intelligible sound they had heard.

"Ten!" he cried aloud. "Ten more, ten more, ten more for poor Jake! Good, good! Pile 'em up, pile 'em up! Only Irish! Hey Joe! Joe! Where's Joe?"

He paused and appeared to be listening for a little, when he began to chuckle again.

"How glad Joe'll be!" he said to himself. "How glad, how glad! Hark!"

He suddenly stopped and threw himself flat on the earth again. His quick ear had caught a sound no one else heard. In another moment he rose up, ran to one of the sewer chimneys and vanished.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

OUT OF THE TOILS.

WHEN he had gone, Svenson looked at his young companion seriously, saying:

"You were right. It was Jake Vredenburg. He have your box, and he is crazy as bedbug. What we do?"

Harvey seemed to be nonplussed.

"Indeed I don't know. It's as much as any man's life is worth to venture into that sewer with that maniac inside."

Svenson nodded.

"One man's life? A dozen could not get him out. I don't like to try it myself. A man have no room in a hole, and he club de life out

with those two club. I wonder where he get them?"

Harvey could not inform him, and after a little while the colonel said gravely:

"We must go now. We have found more dan we expect to find here. It is not good to tempt our luck. We go home now."

Harvey looked round him carefully before they departed saying:

"Did you notice that he went into the same pipe he came out of? I think that is the real entrance to his home."

"Do not go near it den," said Svenson dryly. "You have no club nor have I, and we do not want de head broke from dat man. I come with club myself next time."

"What did he hear? I wonder," said Harvey in a thoughtful tone, when they had got a little distance off. "He went into his hole, like a frightened rat."

"Some one coming probably," answered the colonel looking round him cautiously. "We are by no means out of dis trouble yet, my dear friend. Look sharp."

They moved cautiously along till they came near the foot of the rocks on which Shantytown was built, when they heard the sound of the mysterious club once more down by Murderer's Row and the colonel observed to Harvey:

"Dere is no rest for dat man. He walk all de night. I do not wonder dey are superstitious about him."

They halted to look back, and saw lights moving rapidly about over the flats as if men were searching for something, but when the mysterious raps again sounded they were in a new direction, and the lights would be seen moving off after the noise, as if the men of Murderer's Row were resolved on hunting up the nightly prowler of the flats.

There seemed, too, to be some disturbance up on the rocks above them, for they heard women's voices calling to each other, and the colonel pulled Harvey down.

"Chut!" he whispered. "We are not safe yet."

They listened, and pretty soon heard the voice of a woman say:

"Are ye there, Johanna?"

"And what d'ye want?" was the answer.

"D'ye hear the cop, alanah?" said the first voice. "Sure and I'm un'easy about Mike. He's gone wid the b'yess down to Tim Maginnis's, and maybe the cops will come back and git him."

"Devil a cop will ye see this night," returned the other voice, scornfully. "Sure they know whin they've got enough as well's the best of them. The b'yess laid 'em out good wid their Captain Samuels that was goin' to clane out the Fitzgeralds and the O'Gradys on top of them. It's a good night for both of us, Mrs. O'Grady."

"And ye may say that, Mrs. Fitzgerald, but it's meself will be the glad woman whin Mike comes home for all that."

Then the voices ceased and Harvey and the colonel continued their way to the foot of one of the ravines that were denominated streets, when Svenson said quietly:

"Now come de test. We walk up this street slow, and if dey see us not, all right. If dey see us we have trouble. I wish we had club."

"We have pistols," suggested Harvey.

"Pistols make noise. Do not use him till de last. Club him while you can," was the response, and then they started to run the gantlet of excited Shantytown, moving as noiselessly as possible.

But the colonel had not underrated the vigilance of their foes. The fact was that the women of Shantytown were all up and moving about, excited by the fray and the absence of their lords and masters, who had gone off to the brewery to celebrate their victory over the "cops."

Before long the fugitives saw lights in the street ahead of them, and dodged in to the rocks at the side of the street.

The lights approached, and they saw that a small crowd of women with lamps and candles were searching the street as if they were looking for something.

The two men kept still, and pretty soon saw the women stop not twenty yards away, when the light of the lamps fell on the bodies of two men dressed in the blue police uniform.

"Ah, the murderin' thaves!" said one. "'Tis they that got what they deserved."

"But it's trouble there'll be to-morrow over them, Mrs. O'Grady," said another.

"Sure the times ain't what they used to be," said a third mournfully. "I mind when the cops wouldn't dare come near us, and now, av we happen to lay one out the whole of 'em comes down like so many hungry bounds s'archin' for the man that did it. Bad luck to 'em!"

As she spoke the woman gave a kick to one of the bodies, and the listeners heard a faint groan, which produced a cry from the women.

"Holy Fathers! the baste's alive."

"Split his skull wid an ax," was the amiable suggestion of one old woman with white hair. "Sure the cops tuk me poor boy Dan, and sint him up the river where he died."

"Arrah, don't do no sich thing," cried another. "Let the poor boy lie where he is. Sure he's as good as dead anyway, an' ye won't have to confess to Father McCabe."

"Ay, ay, let the baste die 'asy," commented a third. "Come away, Mrs. Fitzgerald, so wbin the coroner axes ye in the mornin', ye can say ye don't know nothin'."

The suggestion seemed to please the rest, for they passed on, searching the road-bed for articles dropped in the skirmish, and the colonel and Harvey crept out to the place where the bodies lay.

Svenson stirred one, and whispered:

"Are you able to move, my friend? We will help you off."

The man stirred and rolled over, answering in a stupid, dazed way:

"Who? what? where am I?"

"You're in Shantytown," whispered the veteran. "They left you for dead. Can you walk, think you?"

The man struggled up on his elbow, and Harvey helped him to a sitting posture.

"I'll try," he muttered, "but I'm all broke up."

"Make an effort," urged Harvey. "If they come back they'll kill us all to save their own necks. Come."

The words seemed to give strength to the injured man, for he struggled up, and stood there, supported by Harvey, while the colonel felt the other body.

Presently the veteran said in a low tone:

"He is alive, too, but we can't get him off. Come, let us get help."

They took the first man they had found between them, and moved slowly off up the road toward the distant twinkling line of gas-lamps where civilization began.

No one appeared to dispute the way, and at last they cleared the precincts of Shantytown, and the colonel observed, drawing a long breath of relief:

"Thank fortune we are out of dat. How did you get hurt, my friend?"

The injured policeman was walking with more strength than he had shown, since he saw the lights before him, and now he answered as well as he could:

"I d'no'. We went in—captain told us—fire in the air—then they seemed to spring out of the rocks all round us—put up job—must have b'en—rocks came flying—I felt a smash—didn't know nothin' till you folks found me."

"Was your captain hurt?" asked Harvey.

"I don't know," was the weary answer. "Don't make me talk, gents. I'm all broke up—much as I kin do—to walk."

And indeed he was very weak, and they had hard work to do to get him another block, when they heard the welcome sound of a police club—no ghostly rap either—in the next block.

"Go call him here," said the colonel. "I will help our friend here. We want ambulance to fetch de oder."

Harvey started off at a run, calling as he ran to attract attention, and soon spied a policeman halted under a gas-lamp, to whom he told his story.

The guardian of the public peace looked suspiciously at him.

"One of our men hurt, you say? They don't go down yonder."

"No, one of Samuels's men. Haven't you heard the noise of the riot?"

"I ain't got nothin' to do with his precinct," was the dogged reply. "He came in here with his men all broke up—left two in Shantytown and he's botherin' our captain to go back there to-night. I ain't got no orders to do nothin'."

"But at least you'll help a brother officer to your station," said Harvey, warmly. "He is coming along with my friend and I fear he'll need an ambulance to get there."

"Ay, ay, I'll get the ambulance," said the other man, in the same sullen way. "You bring him on, and I'll meet you here."

He went off slowly and Harvey hurried back to his friend to comfort the injured man with the news that the ambulance was coming for him.

They had to wait half an hour under the gas lamp before it arrived, but when it did, Captain Samuels himself came with it, his head tied up with a white bandage, and thanked them warmly for the trouble they had taken, recognizing them at once.

When he heard that there was another of his men still in the hands of the enemy he said with an air of much embarrassment:

"I owe you, gentlemen, an apology. I treated you badly and you have done me a great service. It would have been a lasting disgrace to me to have lost that man. I have sent out an alarm and we shall have help very soon. Will you stay and see the fun? I'm not the man to be beaten by these fellows so easily."

The colonel held out his hand.

"Captain Samuels, my dear friend, we will see you through. You are good man. I tell you where dey are. Down to Alderman Maginnis's, getting drunk. You make de good raid, you redeem yourself."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE POLICE RAID.

The ambulance rolled away with the hurt policeman, and our friends followed it with Captain Samuels, who questioned them closely on what they had seen.

When he heard that Buck Jarvis had been there, he turned earnestly to Harvey:

"You'll make that complaint now, won't you?" he said. "We'll never get such a fair chance at him perhaps."

Harvey hesitated.

"I dare not do it yet, captain. He has in his power a young lady I must save from his clutches, and I have no clew to her save through him."

Samuels compressed his lips.

"As you please," he answered; "but I think I can get it out of him, if once I catch him. You'll swear to what you saw to-night?"

"Yes, if necessary."

"That's all I want."

They arrived in due time at the station-house, which they found full of men; and Captain Jones, a stout, gray-bearded man with a worried expression, seemed to be much relieved at Samuels's appearance.

He took him aside and held a short and whispered conversation, which ended in Samuels coming to our friends and saying:

"They have telegraphed that the men will be here in ten minutes, half the reserve of six precincts, with a mounted platoon. If you gentlemen like to come and see the fun I'll swear you in as specials and give you arms. It's under my command."

Colonel Svenson laughed and seemed pleased.

"I go with much pleasure, captain," he said.

Five minutes later came the clatter of hoofs outside, and the men began to pour in.

When twenty minutes had elapsed Captain Samuels set out with a force of near two hundred men, all told, to raid the rioters of Shantytown, who had given him so much trouble.

They had not very far to go, and found the settlement on the rocks with only a few lights in the cottages.

A short, rapid dash of the mounted men through the narrow street, and four platoons were climbing the rocks on either side, coming on the frightened women of the shanties in such force that resistance was not dreamed of, much less attempted.

The injured policeman was found in the road and carried off in the ambulance, and then Captain Samuels made his arrangements for capturing the male residents of Shantytown, as they came back from their spree, dreaming of quietness.

The police were distributed round the waste lots, and Murderer's Row was visited, but found nearly empty of men.

The few who were there were promptly carried off without raising an alarm, and the captain remarked complacently:

"A bad beginning sometimes makes a good ending, gentlemen. We'll be even with these fellows before morning."

Then they all sunk to silence and watchful-

ness till the sound of the mysterious club of the Night Walker disturbed them.

Harvey and Svenson, by mutual consent, had said nothing to Samuels about him, and the captain, supposing it one of his own men, got very angry and sent round a sergeant to warn all the watchmen to keep strict silence, and on no account to rap.

Nevertheless, the noise continued at long intervals, and the sergeant came back to report that none of the men had made the raps. It must be some drunken rioter, who had captured a club and was prowling round for a frolic.

Again they lay still, watching, and the sound of the mysterious club continued, so as to annoy the captain seriously.

He headed a party to scour the waste lots in the darkness, and made the discovery that a number of men were lying round insensible, having evidently been clubbed.

They were taken to the house where Mrs. Somers had lived, and examined. Six were evidently working men from Shantytown, in their shirt-sleeves, but three more were recognized as professional thieves, who had long defied the police to find them, but had been believed to be residents of Murderer's Row, when they lived anywhere.

The captain jumped at once to the conclusion that they had been clubbed by his own men in the first attack on Shantytown.

"But how came they out here?" he said to Harvey. "It's not like the crooks to leave their friends outside to die."

Harvey hesitated.

"I don't think those men were clubbed by your followers, captain," he said. "The fact is, the man who is making that noise did it."

For, just at that moment the rap of the Night Walker's club sounded not very far away from them, making every one start, in spite of its frequency.

"Tell him de story, my dear friend," Colonel Svenson observed, seeing the mystification of the police captain. "We see if he know it. You have heard of the Night Walker, captain?"

Captain Samuels shook his head.

"Night Walker? No—except—is that the man you told me of last night, sir?"

This to Harvey, who answered:

"It is the same. We saw him again to-night, and saw him club those men."

The captain seemed annoyed.

"Why did you not tell me before?"

"Because, this morning, when I told you, you expressed disbelief of the story—"

"Not disbelief, sir. I could not have been so rude as that."

"I don't know what you call it. You said he was one of the thieves, and that it was only one of their tricks."

"Well, I thought so. But you see your story was so unusual. But please continue."

"Well, captain, we saw him to-night and heard something about him to-day from Mr. Joseph Marks, that they call Uncle Joe—"

"I know him well. Every man on the force knows him. What did he say?"

The captain seemed excited and interested.

"He did not know much about him, but he told us a story that I think has a strong connection with this mysterious man."

And as briefly as he could, he told the story of Uncle Joe's unfortunate comrade who had been driven insane by his beating, twenty years before.

The captain listened thoughtfully to the story, and said, when it was over:

"I remember Jake Vredenburg, by reputation, though he was before my time. The old members of the force called him 'Lightning Jake,' and sometimes 'Thunderbolt Jake.' I've often heard stories of him and Uncle Joe. They used to be terrors in their time. But it seems to me that I saw in the papers that he died in the asylum or something."

"Was drowned, you mean, in trying to swim away. Uncle Joe told us that. But I don't believe the story. A body was found that they buried for him, but it's my belief that he was not drowned, and has come round here in his insane delusions, thinking himself still in the old riot times."

Samuels seemed more thoughtful than ever for he said slowly:

"It is just possible. He must imagine himself still on the force."

"That is probably it, captain. I wish we could get him out. It is strange to me how he manages to exist in those sewer-pipes."

"Oh, they're large enough, for the matter of that," said Samuels quickly. "Those pipes

are a good three feet in diameter, and they open into a brick sewer below, that must be five feet high. Besides, they're dry up here. There's nothing empties into them yet, except maybe a little water when it rains. It is possible—but—we'll see to-morrow. I'll hunt them up."

"But what can the man find to eat?"

Samuels seemed considering again.

"Strange," he muttered. "That would account for those—"

Then he stopped.

"Account for what, captain?"

"Oh nothing—that is—well, in fact, I have had a good deal of complaint from the men of my precinct of losing things at the station-house at night. Clubs have gone, uniform coats and so forth, and no one could find them. It has bred a great deal of trouble in the force. One doesn't like to think there's a thief in the precinct. And yet, now I remember—"

"What?"

"If this poor lunatic really lives in the sewers, there is a man-hole in the back yard, that must communicate with this system, and—yes, now I think of it, there may be something in this—"

"What have you in mind?" asked Harvey, seeing that he hesitated.

The captain's answer was cut short by a long tremulous whistle, the signal agreed on for the return of the rioters, and all jumped up, forgetting everything else in the excitement.

A moment later came a man running in haste.

"Captain, where are you?"

"Here. What is it?"

"They're coming, sir, quite a lot. Shall we club them as they come?"

"By no means. Let them through and keep dark till they're safe. The boys by the rocks will take care of them."

Pretty soon they heard the buzz of a crowd coming, with an occasional whoop and laugh, as the now inebriated O'Grady's and Fitzgerald's with a number of their friends, came reeling back from Maginnis's brewery on their way home, in a state of perfect bliss, from which they were destined to be rudely aroused as soon as they were in the middle of the waste lots, by a sudden irruption of police.

They came on in dozens and scores, and no sound disturbed them till it was too late to retreat or fight.

Some of the less stupid ones tried to resist, and were promptly clubbed into submission, when the whole supply of handcuffs for six precincts was put into requisition and the prisoners marched off through Murderer's Row to Samuels's station-house, concealment being no longer necessary.

When the first streaks of dawn lightened over the rocks of Shantytown at four o'clock, Captain Samuels was happy.

In the haul of the night he had taken in nearly twenty-five hard cases, who had been known as denizens of Murderer's Row, with twelve of their number, who had been "wanted" for some time on various indictments and he said to Harvey gratefully:

"Meeting you two gentlemen has been the making of me to night. If I can to do anything for you, let me know, and I'll do it."

"Find that tin box," was Harvey's answer, and the captain replied emphatically:

"You bet, and it won't cost you any reward neither. I think I know where it is now."

But among all the prisoners that they looked over, ever so carefully in the morning, not a trace was to be found of Buck Jarvis, and Harvey began to doubt almost if he had really seen the man, till he recognized in one of the men who had been clubbed by the mad policeman and brought to by the surgeon the familiar features of Mr. Jim Nelson, the same who had assaulted him in company with Buck, two nights before.

The moment he saw this man, the idea came into his head to work on his feelings and find if he had any tidings of Buck.

He suspected Nelson to have been in Jarvis's company the night before, and remembered that the mad policeman had clubbed some one, who had probably been with Buck, when he went off to hunt up the cause of the raps that had puzzled every one.

Jim Nelson had evidently suppressed sorrow during the raid.

His face was ghastly pale, his head bound up with bloody rags, and he lay on a cot in the house where the injured men had been

taken, hardly able to breathe, his eyes rolling round the room as if searching for some one.

Harvey went to the captain.

"Do you want that man?" he asked, pointing to Nelson.

Samuels shook his head.

"Not now. We did, six months ago, but those confounded lawyers got him out on an *alibi*. No, I don't want him, except for the riot, and there's plenty without him."

"Can I have him?" asked Harvey.

The captain stared.

"Why, certainly. What do you want of him?"

Harvey smiled.

"The fact is, he's an old client of ours. It was our firm defended him and got him off from that burglary."

The captain a wry face.

"All right. Take him along. I don't want him for anything."

Harvey hastened and called a carriage, in which the battered man was placed, and he got in with Colonel Svenson and drove off.

Nelson made no remark when he was helped into the hack, and lay back in his corner as if he were too weak to notice anything, but as they came to the Brooklyn bridge, he gave a groan and muttered:

"Don't be hard on a man, Mr. Harvey."

"Oh, you know me, then!" said Harvey.

A faint smile crossed the burglar's face.

"I don't forget easy," he said. "I didn't want the cops to know it, though."

The colonel laughed.

"Aba! You are not so seek as you make out. Is dat it?"

Nelson grinned again.

"What can a feller do?" he said. "What do you want of me, counselor?"

Harvey turned on him.

"To keep you out of mischief," he said. "If I chose to tell of your attempt to kill me and your burglary, you'd be in a bad box. But I won't. I'm going to take you to a safe place, where the police can't get you, and pay for your nursing till you get well."

The burglar stared, and his face worked.

"You're darned good," he said slowly. "I thought you was a-goin' to quod me."

"I don't want to put any man in jail," said Harvey, "but on the other hand I want you to do the square thing by me."

"I'll do it, counselor, I'll do it," returned the burglar, earnestly. "May the Lord strike me dead, if I won't."

"Then tell me what has become of Buck Jarvis," said Harvey, turning on him sharply. "and where he has bid the girl he stole."

Nelson seemed taken aback.

"What girl?" he faltered.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE COLONEL'S GRIP.

HARVEY looked at him sternly.

"You know well enough what girl."

"Strike me blind if I do," said the burglar, still more earnestly. "Look here, counselor, I ain't on the queer with ye. I swear I ain't. All Buck told me was suthin' 'bout a box he wanted to get out of that house."

"And did he say nothing of a girl? He might have called her his daughter?"

"Nothin', so help me."

"Well, what were you doing out with him last night?"

"Huntin' for the box, counselor, true as I sit here. We turned the old shebang all outer winder, and Buck cussed high and low till we heard the cop's club."

"And then?"

"Then Buck he seemed to get riled, and we set out to find the cop and double bank him; but he double-banked us."

"How? What happened?"

"Darned if I know, counselor, but fu'st thing we knowed Buck went down and I see'd a monstrous big cop—a reg'lar giant—comin' fur us with a club in each hand."

"Did he knock Buck down?"

"I do'nó', counselor. Think he didn't."

"Why?" interrupted Svenson, interested in the story. "How do you know?"

"Tink I'd ba' heard the club, cunnel. Know I heard Cronk when he got it."

"And you? What did you do?"

"Cronk and me fired at him, but missed him. It's hard firin' in the dark with a cop comin' to lay ye out. Then we ran, and he chased us. I heard Cronk go down, and I stopped to shoot. He throwed his cussed club

at me and down I went. It took me on the forehead."

"And then?"

"And then down I went; and I guess he must ha' give me another clip, for I disremember anything till I was in the room, with the doctor over me."

"Well," said Harvey, "I'm glad you've told me the truth. I saw you go down. But Jarvis has escaped, it seems. You're sure he wasn't clubbed?"

"I ain't sure, but I think not, counselor. There was a lot of holes round, and I think he fell inter one. Anyway, I know where to find him, if the cops didn't get him last night."

"Where?" asked Harvey as indifferently as he could speak, to avoid exciting the burglar's suspicions. "You had a meeting place?"

Nelson hesitated.

"I oughtn't to tell, sir," he said.

Harvey turned full on him.

"Look here, Nelson," he said. "We got you out of a bad scrape, and all the gratitude you showed was to try and double-bank me. Now you're going back on me again—"

"I ain't—I swear I ain't, counselor; but I can't go back on Buck, neither. He's my old pal, and you want to send him up on my information. I put it to you, counselor—could I do that?"

"Suppose I tell you that I've no intention of prosecuting Jarvis—that I don't care if he's the biggest receiver of stolen goods in the country—that I've nothing to do with that; but that I want to see him face to face, with no one but my friend here—would that make any difference?" Harvey asked.

The burglar stared.

"I don't understand—" he began.

Colonel Svenson broke in:

"See here, my friend. You know me?"

"No, sir. Heard counselor call you cunnel—that's all."

"Well, I tell you then. Dat man Jarvis he come to my place yesterday and insult my poor old mother. I want to see him, I care not where, so there is no police there. I want to lick him."

Nelson snickered.

"You! Why, he'd lay you out. You don't know Buck Jarvis, I guess. He's a terror, he is."

The colonel smiled.

"So am I. But rest assured we do not want to put de police on him. If I cannot get de best of a man with Nature's weapons—my head, and fist, and feet—I leave him be. Now, my friend, where is he?"

Nelson looked obstinate and sullen.

"I ain't givin' to tell," he said.

The colonel nodded.

"All right; den we take you to de jail—Aha, my dear fellow, not so fast!"

The last exclamation was called forth by Nelson, who, the moment he heard the word jail, put his hand on the carriage-door and tried to leap out.

But the watchful veteran was not so easily fooled.

Before the burglar could make his spring, the long, sinewy fingers of the colonel were on his throat, and he threw him into the bottom of the carriage like a child, and shifted his hold.

One hand was on the burglar's throat, the thumb pressing on the Adam's apple, the fingers in his collar, the other thumb was pressed down into the angle of the jaw, just below the point of the ear, in a manner to produce such exquisite pain that Nelson shrieked aloud.

The colonel relaxed his hold slightly.

"Yell like dat, I kill you!" he growled, in tones of such savage ferocity that even Harvey, who had seen him angry, was surprised.

"Now, den, where is dat Jarvis? Tell me, or, by the seven Rooshian gods, I kill you!"

In the bottom of the carriage, completely at the mercy of the enraged veteran, who looked like a demon, the burglar quailed. His nerve failed before the ferocity of the Dane, and he faltered, half choking:

"For God's sake—I'll tell—don't kill me."

"Where?" growled the colonel.

"In Sandport," stammered Nelson, "'way back in the woods. The gang meet there. Don't go, for God's sake. They'll kill you."

"Kill you, you mean," returned the colonel rising, but keeping his foot on the prostrate burglar. "You come with us and show us de place, or by de seven Rooshian gods, I kill you by de inches. Get up!"

Jim Nelson, pale and quivering, sweating at

every pore, crawled up to his seat and sat crouched in a corner, staring at the colonel like one who saw a ghost.

"Who are you?" he whispered at last. "By the powers, I'd never have tackled you if I'd known what a man you are! You're worser nor the counselor, and he's no fool."

The colonel smiled, for his vanity was not above being touched by a compliment.

"I am de old man," he said; "you know me now. You t'ink you can fool with me?"

Nelson shivered.

"No, by gum! You're a real terror."

"Then tell us just how to find Buck," said Harvey, breaking in. "See here, Nelson, I'll tell you what I want to do. This Buck has carried off a lady of my acquaintance, and I must get her back somehow. All I want is to get her. I don't want to hurt him. He is her step-father, and we want the thing to be kept quiet, you understand. I give you my word that we take no police, and make no use of what we see, if we get the girl back. You say this is a biding-place of Jarvis?"

"Yes, and the boys too," answered Nelson more readily. "Don't ye go there, counselor. I ain't got nothin' ag'in' yer, and I don't wanter see yer double-banked now."

"You t'ink dey double-bank me?" asked the colonel suddenly.

Nelson hesitated.

"I don't know. You're a terror, but they're a tough lot of boys there."

"How many are there?"

"I d'no', cunnel. There must be a lot of 'em since the muss night afore last. All the crooks out of Battle Row went for it to get into bidin'."

"Then how came you back?" asked Harvey.

"You tell two stories, Master Jim."

"No, so help me, counselor. Strike me dead if I ain't tellin' square truth. There was a lot come back, but more stayed. I wouldn't ha' come if Buck hadn't made me."

"Are there twenty there?" asked the colonel.

Nelson considered a little.

"Oh, no; can't be more'n a dozen or maybe ten. Ye can't keep the boys still long. If so be Buck gits back early, they'll go out, some of 'em, to hang 'round and see what comes of the boys was took last night."

"Den we go dere to-night," said the colonel promptly. "Meester 'Arvie, my dear friend, you have stay away too long from your office. You go dere, say you are seek, den go home and go to sleep. Young man cannot stay up two night and be well. I see to dis man."

Indeed he had noticed that Harvey, now that the excitement was waning, found it difficult to keep awake, and the veteran's advice was grateful to the young man.

They came to the academy, where the colonel bestowed Nelson in an upper room and told him:

"You stay dere if you are wise, my friend. So sure you try to get away, you come to grief. You know me now."

The burglar looked frightened.

"Strike me dead if I don't act on the square with you two gents," he protested. "But I tell ye it's a risky biz ye're goin' on."

Harvey went away to the office of Smith, Brown & Smith, and found much to his relief that he had not been needed for anything that others could not do.

He had a confidential talk with the senior partner, with whom he had always been a favorite, and told him the whole story.

He had expected to be scolded for his Quixotic behavior, but as soon as Judge Smith had heard the story of his interview with General Mix he burst out:

"The old hunks! And he came the bigh and mighty over my managing man, did he? I'll show him. I've as much money as he has, and my family's as good. I remember him when he was a poor, miserable second-lieutenant, by Heavens, living on his pay, till he married Miss Van Busby and came into a tub of grease, as it were. You go on, Harvey, and run this case through. I'll back you, my boy. If it comes into court, I'll argue it for you, and it sha'n't cost you a cent. Mix, by Jove!"

So it was settled, and Harvey went away a much happier man, got to his room in the boarding-house he had frequented for ten years, and fell asleep almost the moment he touched the pillow.

When he awoke the sun was setting, and he felt able for work again, so he went over to his faithful friend's "academy" and found the

colonel waiting for him, full of the scheme they were about to undertake.

"Arvie, my dear friend," he said, "I have had talk with that Nelson, and found out all I want to know. You leave dis thing to me. De ladee is dere, I am sure."

"That's what I think, colonel; but how are you so sure?"

"It is safe place. De police know not of it. It is quiet village, and no one t'ink of de thief being dere. Jarvis have farm-house dere, and all think him good man. He keep stolen propertee in de barn, and run him out when de affair forgot. I tell you he is smart man, dis Jarvis. It do me good to lick him."

"Then you're set on that, colonel?"

"Set on it? Ah, my dear friend, you do not know me after all dese year. Yes; you shall get de ladee, but I shall lick de man. I do not trust it to another, not even to you, my dear pupil, though you are good too, none better of all my pupil."

"I am quite content to leave it in your hands, colonel, but remember—"

"Remember what, my dear friend?"

"That Nina's rescue is the first thing."

"My dear boy, dat is settled. Dis Jarvis and his man may be terrors, but dey shall see dat we are terror too, a terror to de toughs. Hal what you say? De ole man? Dey call me a dude nowadays. Dey think, because I am gentleman, de tough can get de best of me. Aha, my friend, I have fool many men in my time. Dey always pitch on me de first man of de crowd, till dey know me. After dat, you see, dey are fascinated by me. Dey would run mile to get away from me. We will see. Now it is time to get ready. Dat Nelson he have try to run three time to day. Do not trust him. I tell you he has black eyes, and dey are de treacherous kind all de time."

"Then why not go without him?"

"Ah, my dear friend, you do not know me. I love dose rascals. Dey are a fascination to me. I love to see dem try to get away from me and dare not. I am at home among dem. You see. I will show you. I will make this Ne'son do my bidding like a dog. I love to tame de wild beast and de bad man. It is my vocation. I was born to rule dem."

CHAPTER XXXI.

A QUIET LITTLE WALK.

THE village of Sandport, Long Island, is one of those places that are a constant reproach to the Governments of the Union and the State of New York, from the neglect with which they are treated.

It has existed for more than a century, having been founded before Revolutionary times; it has a blacksmith's shop, a store, and as many as three houses within a mile; yet Sandport is not down on the maps, and the Federal Government has positively refused to grant it a postmaster, alleging that the salary paid the official would be an unjustifiable waste of public money, inasmuch as no letters were ever sent to Sandport, and the inhabitants could not read or write.

That this was a libel was proven by a petition of the inhabitants to their member of Congress, signed by nine freeholders, but it was admitted that this petition was written out by a summer boarder, who wanted to get his letters without driving seven miles to the nearest post-office, and as the member remarked at the time—there was a suspicious sameness in the signatures, though the names were those of real residents, inducing him to the belief that the summer boarder had taken them all down with his own hand.

Anyhow Sandport does not yet possess a post-office, neither is it on the map, and its fame is confined to a few old sportsmen who keep it secret, as a very fine preserve of trout in summer, and quail in the fall of the year.

The inhabitants are simple, and live on corn-meal and pork most of the year, while the nearest railroad station is seven miles off at Stoppington City.

To go to Sandport one has to get a farmer's wagon or toil over sandy roads in the midst of scrubby pines and firs.

Once there, the solitude is absolute as in the wilds of Northwestern Canada.

It was at the station of Stoppington City,—where they have fifteen houses, a post-office and a bar-room—that three passengers got off at the hour of 11.45 P.M., when no one was in the habit of stopping, except residents of the

country coming home from a "tear" in the city, on the night after the police raid at Shantytown.

They all wore dusters, and went away as if they knew the place, though Stoppington City was deserted at that hour, save by a few dogs.

Two of the men kept close together, and had their arms interlocked in a manner that would have suggested affection, but for an occasional clink that told of handcuffs connecting them.

The third walked behind, as if to watch the other two.

"This way, cunnel," said one of the twins, in a sulky sort of way, as they walked off. "It's a long road, and there's a many beasts of dogs to bother a man."

"I take care of de dogs, my friend," replied the voice of Colonel Svenson. "You take care of de way, and remember, de first sign of treachery, I leave you for de coroner to sit upon."

Nelson grunted and made no answer, but proceeded silently till they heard the bark of a dog a little way ahead, as they cleared the houses of Stoppington City.

It was a small bark from a small dog, but it roused a chorus of bigger growls and barks from bigger dogs, increasing every minute, and the colonel remarked quietly to Harvey:

"My friend, de neddy is good for de dog as for de man. Give it dem hard, and say no word."

The chorus still increased, and they heard the scampering of feet as the different dogs of Stoppington City came out to see what was the matter, for strangers in that place usually drove, and the Stoppington dogs could hardly believe in the excitement of a real foot passenger to worry.

The three pilgrims had entered a narrow winding country road, and were plodding on, when the first dog caught sight of them, gave cry, and came racing after, barking at every step.

The chorus behind immediately rose up again, and Harvey, who was looking back over his shoulder, said:

"Here they come, colonel, quite a crowd."

The colonel stopped and said to Nelson:

"You know how to fight a dog?"

Nelson nodded.

"Ay, ay, but I hain't got nothen to hit with. Gimme suthin'!"

The colonel made no answer, for at that moment the dogs stopped barking and settled into the low growl and rush which tells of a resolute attack; for they were headed by a huge Siberian who meant business every time.

Even Harvey shrank back instinctively at the terrible aspect of the enormous brute; but the colonel strode to his side, and said warningly:

"Now, now! Flinch and you are gone!"

Then came a growling rush and the sound of a dull thud.

Then another thud and crack.

The great dog dropped instantaneously and the other dogs, who had been outstripped by him, stopped short in a scrambling rush and began to bark in tones of fury, daring to advance no further, for no animal has more prudence than a dog who sees his comrade killed.

The big Siberian lay like a log, with a broken skull, its sides heaving still, but incapable of sense or attack.

The other dogs stood there, baying, and the colonel said to Harvey in a low voice:

"Stand still. Make no motion. They will stop their noise at last."

In fact, as the three men stood silent and absolutely motionless, the big dogs ceased to bark first, then the little ones stopped, and one of them sat down and gave vent to his feelings in a "wuff" of dissatisfaction, after which he was silent.

The impassive attitude of the men puzzled the beasts, who evidently did not know what to make of it, till suddenly the big Siberian jumped up again.

"Ah, would you, sir?" cried the colonel sternly, and he made a step toward the brute.

The big Siberian turned and ran away, his tail between his legs, with a low yelp of fear, and the other dogs scampered for their lives, as if frightened to death.

The colonel turned to Harvey.

"You see, my dear friend, dog is like man. De panic come and he run from a baby. Knock de biggest, and de rest run with him. Come along."

Then to Nelson scornfully:

"What for you shake so? I thought you were a brave man?"

Nelson shuddered slightly.

"I ain't a coward," he said humbly. "But I were once tore by one of those brutes a'most to death, and that makes me think of it. They're jist awful, when they get ye down. Tearing, growling! Ah!"

And he shook again at the recollection.

"We allers drove when we went to Sandport," he explained presently. "The dogs only barks then, and gives it up."

"Well, you are not hurt now," said the colonel, sharply. "Shake no more. Come on."

They plodded on through a soft, sandy road for another hour, when they began to leave the fields and enter a big pine barren, where the trees rose to about ten feet in height, and appeared unable to grow any further, while the underbrush was made of low, creeping briars.

"The boys' place is in here," said Nelson, "but it's a long tramp there, and I'm tired."

"We have all de night before us and it is not cold," said the colonel cheerfully. "You will come on, my friend, or we know de reason."

Nelson submitted, and they went on for another hour, when Harvey said:

"We must be getting near there. How far do you call it from the station?"

"Boys calls it se'ven miles," said Nelson, "but it's a deep road and we don't go fast."

"How near are we now?" asked the colonel. The burglar hesitated.

"Pretty nigh," he said at last. "Yon's the fence on the farm."

They saw the old fence gleaming white in the darkness, and Svenson said:

"So far, so good. Now we go into de wood."

"What fur?" asked Nelson, suspiciously.

"To wait for de light," was the answer.

The burglar seemed uneasy.

"Won't you gents let me go?" he pleaded. "I've brought ye here, and the house ain't fifty rod off; I don't want them to know I blowed on 'em."

"They shall not," said the colonel soothingly. "I promise you dat my friend. We do not take you to de house with us."

Nelson seemed relieved.

"Then kin I go?" he asked joyfully.

"Certainly you can go, my friend, but only at de time we go. You understand? We wait till de morning. Den you can go back on de road. We would not expose you to de dog."

Nelson seemed to be disappointed somehow.

"I ain't afraid to go back," he protested. "I kin go another way, where there's no dogs."

"Exactly, exactly," returned the colonel in the same quiet way. "I see, my friend. You are very sharp, but I was not born to-day. You stay till I tell you to go."

And the little party went into the woods and sat down among some trees, when the colonel said to Nelson:

"Dis handcuff tire me. What you say I take it off awhile?"

"I wouldn't try to do no runnin', boss," was the meek answer, and the colonel took a key from his pocket and unlocked the steel bracelet that confined his wrist to that of the uneasy burglar.

"And now," said the veteran quietly, "I have leetle piece advice to give you, my friend. We are alone, you see. No one rear. You cry out, no one hear you. Ha!"

"No," was the answer rather tremulous.

"Very well den," said the colonel quietly, "you and me shake bands, eh?"

"Why certainly," answered the burglar.

"Meester 'Arvie, my dear friend," continued the colonel, "you shake hands too with our friend, Nelson. We have to thank him for act on de square so far."

Harvey, understanding from the veteran's tone that something was up, willingly took the proffered hand and the colonel continued rising:

"Now we three make leetle agreement to be true to each other. You are ready, my friend, Nelson?"

"Ready? Yes. Strike me dead if I ain't acted on the square by ye," answered Nelson.

"Den we are ready," continued Svenson. "We take de oath, Danish fashion, by de tree of de forest. I am Dane, you know."

"All right," replied Nelson. "I'll swear any way you please, so you let me go."

"Den come clasp dis tree, we three," said the veteran. "So. We mako ring round him."

The three men made a ring round a small oak tree, hand in hand, and the colonel said:

"Speak after me. We three, by dis tree, swear to be, each to me, true as steel."

Harvey and Nelson repeated the words, and the colonel continued:

"Let go hands. Nelson, you clasp de tree, and repeat de second oath."

The mystified burglar obeyed and threw his arms round the tree, when the colonel made a quick signal to Harvey.

In a moment Nelson's wrists were seized by the two strong men, there was a click of steel, and the colonel said quietly:

"Now, Meester Nelson, you can go home if you want to. We have finish with you."

The burglar's wrists had been handcuffed round the tree; but at first he thought it was only a part of the oath.

"How can I go?" he said. "I'm fast."

The colonel shrugged his shoulders.

"Dat is your affair. You can go. We have no more use for you. Come, 'Arvie, my dear friend, we have business to do."

And the two friends moved away, when Nelson suddenly yelled:

"My God! You won't leave me alone here, will you? Help! help!"

The colonel instantly sprung back to him and dealt him a blow on the nape of the neck that knocked him dizzy.

"You will, will you?" was all he said.

He took a large silk handkerchief out of his pocket and tied it in the burglar's mouth, making a large wad, so as to form a perfect gag, and then said, in the quiet, smiling way he had used all along:

"I tell you you could go, I did not say to yell for help, my friend. Now you cannot go or yell either. Sit down."

He fumbled in his pocket, brought out another pair of handcuffs of much larger size, forced Nelson to sit down, and, in spite of desperate struggles, with Harvey's help, brought the man's legs together and fastened the ankles at the other side of the tree, leaving the prisoner as helpless as a trussed fowl. Then the colonel shook his finger at him, saying:

"You think to fool de old man, ha? You go to alarm dis Jarvis, ha? You think you can get away from me, ha? Dis man is a terror, is he? Let him take care of himself tonight. Dere are toughs in de house, are dere? Well, we will show dem dat two honest gentlemen can be a terror to all de toughs. I play with men like you."

He said no more, but strode away with Harvey, and when they got back to the road, observed to his companion:

"Now begins de fight. Your arms are in good order?"

"Yes. Brass knuckles, slung-shot, knife and pistol. I don't like such thieves' weapons, colonel."

The colonel gave a short laugh.

"Why should de thief have all de effective weapons, and use dem on de honest man? Dey will surely have dem on deir side, and we may as well be on equal footing. Now you leave dis to me, and come on. I run dis affair. You do as I do. De odds are against us. We must not lose a card."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE GANG AT HOME.

THE fence on the road proved to extend along the edge of the wood for about a quarter of a mile, when they saw open sky again, and Harvey very soon said:

"That must be the house, colonel. I wonder if there are any dogs there."

They spied two haystacks, standing back from the road a little way; beyond that a large barn and a small house.

"We soon find out," said the colonel. "Follow me, I show you how to fix a dog."

They climbed over the fence and the colonel instantly dropped on all-fours.

"Creep," he said in a low tone. "We must take lesson from Indians when we fight de human wild beast. Who say dat de romance of life is gone?"

Harvey followed his example and they crept across the field to the back of the haystacks, when another fence confronted them.

This they skirted to a place where some bars stood, and then softly removed the bottom bar and crept through.

The colonel laid his hand on Harvey's arm and whispered in his ear:

"If dere are any men in de barn, we must slug dem. You understand?"

Harvey nodded, and they went round the corner of a haystack.

The next moment, with a frightened rush and a chorus of grunts, a dozen pigs dashed past them and scampered off into an orchard making Harvey's heart beat tumultuously from the suddenness of the affair.

The colonel clutched his arm, whispering:

"Steady! listen!"

They listened intently, but all was silent for near a minute, when the snort of a horse in the barn made Svenson say:

"Quiet! He smell us! Quiet!"

Presently, all being still, they went on and executed a regular exploring trip round the barn, discovering no one up and no dog around the premises.

Under a shed was a large and roomy vehicle of the "cart" variety, with two wheels, and the colonel appeared to be struck with an idea on finding it in the dark.

"Pull it out," he whispered; "we may want it when we go. Dere is horse in de stable."

They pulled it out in the faint starlight and found it to be quite a handsome thing.

"I bet five dollar dey stole it," said the old soldier with a smothered chuckle. "It will be joke to take it—ha? I tell you it is hard to beat de old man. Come, let us see de horse. Quiet, quiet!"

They went softly to the stable, and the colonel went in first.

The frightened snort of the horse was heard, and the veteran said soothingly:

"W'oa, my friend, w'oa! Ah, dat is it."

He had gained the horse's side and was patting and soothing it.

"It is fine animal," he said. "I know good horse in de dark. Skin like silk. Come, dere must be harness somewhere."

A little careful fumbling in the dark had the result of bringing out a set of harness with handsome silver mountings, and the colonel chuckled again, observin':

"I tell you dis was stolen, all at de same time. I hear in de papers of gang out in Westchester county, steal horse and wagon and get off safe. Dis is de gang. Come, we shall want a ride to take de ladee home."

And so saying he led the horse very slowly out, pausing frequently to make it seem as if the noise of the animal's hoofs was only the result of natural movements in the stable.

Thefeat was accomplished at last, and they could see in the starlight that they had a large and handsome bay horse to deal with.

"He big horse," said the veteran, admiringly. "De English style for dog-cart. Come, he vill do."

They harnessed the horse without any sort of trouble, the animal seeming to be quite reconciled to any change of ownership, and then the colonel observed:

"Now we have de means to run, we get de ladee. We tie him here."

He led the horse down a sort of lane, that evidently communicated with the road, but found a locked gate dividing them therefrom.

"De old soldier never forget to reconnoiter," said Svenson, dryly. "It is lucky we come here dis time. De jimmy is good thing for de honest man on a pinch."

He took from his pocket a small steel-jointed "jimmy," and wrenched the padlock from its staples without noise.

Then he performed the same operation to the hinges of the gate, and the two men carried it out of the way, up the lane, so as leave only a small opening.

"In de dark," said the colonel, "it is well to know de way. We may have to run. If so, come down de lane, go for dis place, and de gate will puzzle dem. We tie de horse thus. A pull on dis set him loose. You understand? Boots off. Put dem in."

Then they went back in stocking feet toward the house, and the colonel pointed to the east.

A faint tinge of white was coming up among the stars, and a cloud that hung there was showing a pearly line at the lower edge.

"De dawn come. We are just in time," the veteran whispered. "Now for it."

He strode boldly up to the door, rapped on it with a slung-shot, and waited.

Almost immediately some one inside made a spring, and ejaculated:

"Who in blazes is there?"

"Nelson, Nelson," said the colonel, in a low tone, and Harvey was startled to hear how closely he imitated the burglar's tones.

"Where's Buck? I want him."

The man inside instantly came to the door, and opened it, saying sleepily:

"That you, Nelse? Where'n blazes—"

He got no further.

The colonel was on one side, Harvey on the other; and Harvey saw a head.

There was a dull thud, and the colonel caught the man in his arms before he had time to fall, when he whispered:

"Well done, my pupil. Carry him outside."

Harvey took the man's heels, the colonel his head, and they laid him on the grass.

Then the colonel felt him.

"He is safe," he whispered. "Now for de ladee. Now for de ladee."

They stole into the house, and heard the snoring of more than one person.

"Dey sleep hardest now," whispered Svenson. "We find de ladee. Surely she do not snore."

They counted the snores of five people as they stole on, and presently Harvey heard a low sigh, as if some one had woken up. Something in that sigh made his heart beat hard. It came from a room at the end of the passage, and he stole toward it, and tried the lock.

It was fast, and he signed to the colonel, for he dared not speak.

The colonel came forward, and applied his jimmy to the door.

"Get ready!" he whispered. "If dere is a noise, de fight begin."

"Crack! cr-r-r-sh!"

Not much of a sound after all. Not enough to waken a sound sleeper, as many a householder has found to his cost next morning. Merely the sound of small screws torn out of wood somewhat rotten from holding them so long.

But the sound had evidently wakened some one inside the room; for Harvey heard the sound of a creaking bedstead, and the low, smothered exclamation:

"My God! what's that?"

The next moment he was in the room, for he had heard the voice of Nina Somers.

"It is I—Harvey," he whispered, eagerly. "Come to save you. Are you dressed?"

He trembled for the answer and for the self-possession of the girl.

And he heard some one turning in bed, in another room, and mutterings.

After what seemed an age of waiting, he heard the rustle of something near, and a soft hand touched him.

The next moment Nina Somers was in his arms, and whispering in his ears:

"The woman—she's asleep there. They would not trust me alone."

"Are you dressed?" whispered Harvey. "We have a wagon outside."

"Wait," was her only answer. "I'll come in a minute. Go outside."

Harvey let her go instantly and stole back. He found the colonel at the door of the house listening, and the veteran beckoned him to the grass outside.

"You found her?" he asked.

"Yes, thank God! She'll be out in a moment. She understood."

The veteran nodded.

"Dat is good, if she do not take too long to fasten her hair. It grow lighter. Hark!"

They heard a voice in the house, that of a woman, harsh and angry:

"What are you doing, you minx?"

Then came a scuffle, and out of the house came flying the half-dressed Nina, carrying a bundle of clothes, while the figure of the amiable Mag, fat and burly, in the scantiest possible attire, came rushing after her.

And Mag was screaming at every jump, while the house was roused, from the sounds of scrambling and swearing inside.

Nina rushed out panting, and Harvey caught her in his arms without further ceremony, and ran off toward the lane.

The colonel sprung toward the big woman with the buggy whip which he had brought with him, and dealt her a cut around the body that caused her instant collapse and retreat, with a shrill scream.

Then the veteran called out:

"Good-night, gentlemen. Make my compliment to Buck!"

With that he too ran toward the lane, but more slowly, and frequently halting to look back. He was puzzled why the thieves did not come, and looking for Buck Jarvis and his friends.

He had not long to wait. Out they came before he was half way to the lane, and the crack of pistols showed that they realized they had been tricked. Their aim was bad in the faint light, and Svenson could see they were only half-dressed and confused.

He counted eight; but his pet aversion, Buck Jarvis, was not visible, and the veteran ran to the lane and darted down.

In the increasing light he saw that Harvey had reached the cart and was helping Nina in, with some trouble.

"Dey need time," he thought, and with that he faced round and began to fire at his pursuers, with such aim that one man dropped and the rest ran to shelter and fired as hard as they could. It was like a regular skirmish.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE RESCUE.

BUT the skirmish did not last long, for the odds were too great.

Svenson emptied his pistol, falling back all the time, till he heard Harvey shout:

"Colonel! colonel! Come back! We're all right."

As soon as he heard that, he turned and ran like a deer.

Harvey was in the cart, Nina beside him, and the young man had the reins, while the horse was plunging.

The back seat was open, for the cart was arranged in the Irish jaunting-car style, and Colonel Svenson scrambled in and cried:

"All right, my dear friend. Go ahead!"

Then came a cut of the whip, and away went the jaunting-car, with the horse at full gallop, running away under a hot fire from the infuriated thieves, who saw too late how they had been tricked.

Harvey let him run as hard as he liked into the shelter of the wood, till the animal of his own accord dropped into a trot, when he spoke for the first time.

"Colonel."

"My dear friend?"

"If you don't mind changing seats with Miss Somers, I shall be obliged," said Harvey, in an indifferent sort of way and pulling up.

The colonel cast a glance over his shoulders and saw that the young lady was only half dressed, and had thrown an old cloak over her shoulders, so the veteran bolted out, as if struck by lightning, ran round and stood by the horse's head, with his back resolutely turned, and remained there till he heard a sweet voice say:

"Please get in, and don't look."

The colonel turned round again with his eyes on the ground, climbed up to his place beside Harvey, and the cart proceeded at a trot for another mile or two, through thick woods, when Nina's voice suddenly said in tones of satisfaction:

"Thank goodness! I'm dressed at last."

Harvey looked round, and the transformation had been effected. A well-dressed lady, with her hair no more rumpled than fashion permits, was glancing back at him with a brightened color and smile.

Nina was dressed.

The back seat of a jaunting-car, with two men in front, is rather a curious place for a dressing-room, but perseverance and woman's wit will accomplish wonders, and Harvey, who had been wondering how to get the girl on the cart without attracting notice, heaved a sigh of relief, saying:

"We had a narrow escape, Miss Somers. Only your readiness and courage saved us."

"I was afraid I should have to run for it," she answered. "The woman slept light, so I got all my things together at once, and kept the bundle in my hand, while I slipped on piece after piece. She told me she'd kill me if she caught me trying to run again."

"She's not likely to find you again," said Harvey consolingly. "I'm going to take you straight to your uncle's, Miss Somers. You're safe at no other place. Do you know anything of the trains here?"

"No; they wouldn't let me out. I have been a close prisoner since yesterday morning."

"How stupid of us not to inquire last night," said Harvey, half-aloud, when the colonel answered:

"How you know we did not, my dear friend? I manage dis affair. We have just ten minute now to catch de Stoppington morning train. You must whip up."

Harvey started and laid on the whip, sending the big horse on a tearing gallop, under which the miles quickly vanished.

As they neared Stoppington they heard the scream of the engine, and had just time to scramble aboard, turning horse and cart loose in the road.

The last they saw of it, the animal was running away up the road, with the reins over the dash-board; and the colonel remarked, dryly:

"Dey can take him now. For my part, I do not want to drive dat horse too much in de place where people look at him. Dey might ask question. I borrow horse, I do not steal him. It is not healthy. I have lived in California, my dear friend."

There were but few people on the train, and they excited no notice as they went on, Harvey having paid the fares.

An hour later, when it was still early enough to make empty streets, in the city, a hack rattled up to General Mix's door, and Harvey insisted on rousing the veteran of Mexican War memory to present to him his niece, with a short history of her capture and recapture.

The general, who was a widower and a lover of luxury, came down in a terrible bad temper, but relented somewhat at the sight of the pleading face of Nina, who bore a strong resemblance to her mother, as the old man remembered her in her youth.

He summoned his housekeeper and gave the young lady into her charge, after which he evinced a decided inclination to send Harvey away as if business were closed between them.

Harvey rather took him aback by assuming the initiative, saying:

"Good-morning, general. I have brought your niece to you, without a suit as it happens, so it has not cost you a penny. Her fortune, the bonds of which I spoke—"

"Ah yes, yes," interrupted the old millionaire without ceremony. "Bring them here, young man, bring them here. I'll take charge of them, of course, for her benefit."

"Pardon me," returned Harvey, coldly. "There are some formalities to attend to first. I am responsible for them. You must take out letters of administration, and give the usual bonds before I give them up. You can address our firm when you are ready, general. Good-day."

And he bowed his way out, leaving the old millionaire looking decidedly blank at the coolness of the young lawyer.

Harvey got into the back and said to Colonel Svenson, who had not gone in:

"I think I cut the old fellow's comb for him that time. He has no more heart than a stone, but he wants to get hold of his niece's little fortune, such as it is. I fear, if we don't find it for her, she stands a chance of being turned out of his house, after all."

"Would that worry you very much, my dear friend?" asked the colonel slyly. "You would have to marry her then, to save her from dis Buck, who, after all, is her step-father."

Harvey colored.

"Frankly, I love her. It's no use hiding it any more, and this fifty thousand dollars, if I find it, will be a perpetual barrier between us. But it is my duty to my client to find it, and I'm going to do what I can."

"Where we go now?" asked the colonel, as the back rolled on up town.

"I thought we'd go up to Samuels's precinct before we dismissed the hack," said Harvey in an apologetic tone. "You see I can't help being anxious about it, colonel. He may have found the box. He promised to explore the swerves for it."

They rolled on and the colonel was nodding in his corner when they finally drew up at the ninety-ninth precinct station-house and Harvey got out to see the captain.

The veteran had been up two nights, and he stood it no better than the youngster.

Harvey left him sleeping in the coach, and went into the station-house, where he found the captain sitting at his desk.

As soon as Samuels saw him, his face changed to a smile, and he said slowly:

"Ab, sir, is that you? Glad to see you."

"Have you found anything?" asked Harvey.

The captain smiled.

"Suppose I have; what would you say?"

"I should say you were a brick."

"Thank you. Well, I have."

"What? Where?"

"Your box, with a lot of other stuff, in an arm of the large sewer that runs through those waste lots."

"Have you found the madman?"

"No."

"No!"

"No, but I have an idea I know where he must be."

"Where?"

"Still in the sewers," was the dry reply.

"A man with a taste that way can go a good many miles under New York. I haven't any inclination to follow him, I assure you."

"Please tell me how you found it, and what was in it, captain. Here is the list of the property and papers."

"And here is an inventory of what we found. The lock was unbroken, but of course we opened it before witnesses, and can swear to the contents."

"That's all right, captain. You did right."

He scanned the lists, and began to check off article after article, the captain writing imperturbably the while, till Harvey finally said:

"The lists seem to agree. Can I have the box?"

The captain shook his head.

"Not unless you can swear you're the owner, or bring a power of attorney from her. Who is this Mrs. Jarvis?"

"She's dead, captain, and her daughter is the owner now."

"Bring me the proper papers then, and you can have the box. I have to do this for my own protection."

"From what?"

"Buck Jarvis," replied Samuels laconically.

"It seems, from these papers, he was the lady's husband, and he might want to take out administration papers. You see you might have made your complaint and I could have put him out of the way as a criminal, but now he's as good as any other man. See the point?"

Harvey was nonplussed for a moment, and then suddenly said:

"Suppose I stand ready to make a complaint that will enable you to make a haul of all Buck Jarvis's stolen property; would you give me the box or turn it over to the young lady herself?"

The captain stared.

"I don't understand you."

"I mean this. I've just returned from Buck's secret place, where his gang bide their plunder. I recovered the young lady from him, and we drove away in a horse and dog-cart I believe to have been stolen."

The captain started slightly.

"What kind of a horse?"

"Bay, one white hind-foot, sixteen or more hands high; dog-cart wood color, silver-plated harness marked with a monogram of M. B. Is that enough?"

Samuels hunted in his desk, and brought out a paper which he scanned. Then he smote his fist on the table.

"By Jove, it's the same! Stolen right before last from before a door in Fifth avenue. Groom stunned with a neddy. Where is it?"

Harvey smiled.

"That's my business. You promised to let me have that box without a reward. I can't give you information for nothing. The finest police in the world ought to be able to find out a handsome and conspicuous rig like that, surely!"

The captain bit his lips.

"You've got me, sir. You shall have the box, if you'll give me a receipt to protect me."

"I'll give you a receipt in the name of our firm—Smith, Brown & Smith. Will that do?"

The captain looked surprised.

"Certainly. Do you represent them?"

"I am their manager. Where's the box?"

"You'll give me the information, then?"

"Certainly. I never break my promises."

The famous box was brought out, and Harvey took it to his coach and said to the colonel quietly, awaking him:

"Take that home for me. It's the box. I'll come over after I'm through here. Buck has escaped again."

The colonel rubbed his eyes.

"All right, my dear boy. I pay de coach and you settle with me."

He drove away and Harvey went back.

"Now captain," he said, "I'll tell you the story if you like, but I don't believe you'll find Buck Jarvis."

"Skipped, hey?" quoth the captain, thoughtfully. "Maybe he has, maybe not."

Then Harvey told the story of his night trip, and Samuels listened with close attention till it was over, when he went into an inner office, and the click of a telegraph instrument was heard for several minutes. When he came back he said:

"Guess I've cooked their goose, and tonight, if I mistake not, I'll solve the mystery of our friend who lives in the sewers."

"What have you done?" asked Harvey, full of interest at once.

"I've set indicators along his tracks. We found them all over; and if he comes out we'll nab him sure."

"You won't hurt the poor wretch?"

"Not if we can help it, but we've got to get him for the credit of the force. I've sent for Uncle Joe. The men think, if it's Jake, he may know Joe's voice. Besides he ain't likely to fight the old uniforms."

"Who do you think stole the horse we found?"

"Buck himself, I'm sure. He was here in the first part of the racket, night before last, and it was he planned the Shantytown make-believe fight that got us into grief at first. But the prisoners don't know anything more about him. He disappeared just as clean as if he'd been a ghost. It's my theory that he went off while the other men were on their spree and knew that they had gone too far. The stealing of the horse I regard as only a chance exploit. Probably the temptation was too great to find such a vehicle standing out in the street at night with only a small boy to guard it, one of those fashionable things they call a tiger you know, so he knocked the boy over with a neddy and drove away. Easy enough to do, of course. The owner was inside talking to his girl, I suppose, and didn't mind anything. The first thing he knew of it was a good hour after, when one of the patrolmen found the boy on the walk and roused the house. An hour's a good start for a keen hand like Jarvis. But we'll nab him yet."

"But he was not at the gang's bidding place. At least we did not see him, and Miss —, the lady we saved said she had not seen him since he left her there day before yesterday."

"That may be. In that case he may have sent on the cart by a Brooklyn confederate and staid himself at his own place. I've seen to that. He'll be arrested wherever he is."

The tinkling of a bell at this moment told them that a telegraphic message was waiting in the inner office, and the captain hurried in.

The clicking continued nearly a minute, and the captain came out smiling.

"They've got him," he said. "They took him in his own place not five minutes ago."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CONCLUSION.

THAT night, out on the waste lots by Murderer's Row, under the rocks of Shantytown, the whole reserve of Captain Samuels's precinct was lying in wait by the long rows of chimney-like sewer-pipes that studded the lots, waiting for the visit of the mysterious Night Walker, who had given so much trouble to every one.

Harvey and Colonel Svenson were with the captain, and Uncle Joe Marks was one of the party, his huge bulk clad in the uniform he had not worn for years and could by no means button now.

All was quiet at eleven o'clock and twelve struck before anything was heard of the maniac.

As the last stroke pealed on the air the indicators began to ring and Samuels said, quietly:

"Here he comes. Now we shall see."

Ten minutes later a man's head came out of the same chimney as that from which Harvey had first seen the Night Walker emerge, and the strange visitor leaped to the earth in full sight, a man of great height, clad in a policeman's coat much too small for him and the remains of a pair of trowsers, a long beard

covering his face, which was shaded by a felt hat.

He stopped to look round him and seemed to be listening, but as the policemen lay still, according to orders, the maniac advanced to the hollow surrounded by broken stone and sounded his club.

He seemed to be puzzled by the silence that followed and presently sounded again, when Uncle Joe cried out from his hiding-place behind a sewer pipe:

"Jake! Jake Vredenburg!"

At the same moment all the policemen jumped out and moved down on the maniac at a run.

They had expected a wild start and attempt to get back, but to their surprise he stood still and sounded his club again, as if he had not heard them.

A few moments later he was surrounded by policemen and Captain Samuels held up a bull's-eye to his face asking:

"Who are you? How dare you make a rap?"

The man turned on him a pale face with unsteady eyes and laughed.

"Who am I? That's good. Who are you? I'm on special dooty."

"What's your name and number?" asked Samuels sternly.

"Jacob—Jacob Vre—Vre—I don't know," answered the man vaguely. "They used to call me Light—Lightning Jake—but I ain't that any more. Who are you?"

"Captain of this precinct," was the reply.

The mad patrolman instantly saluted and began to speak earnestly:

"It ain't my fault, Cap, that I havn't got him yet, but things seem changed somehow round here. I don't understand it."

"Understand what! Who were you to get?" the captain asked sharply.

"Buck Snedecor," was the prompt reply. "I thought I had him once, but I woke up and found it was a dream. I beg pardon, sir, but if you'd let me have my partner, Joe Marks, we'd do better than I can alone."

"Will you go with Joe if I lend him to you?" asked Samuels most kindly, seeing that the man was really out of his senses.

Lightning Jake saluted again:

"I hope I know how to obey orders, sir."

Harvey, who had watched the whole scene, was surprised at the quiet, reasonable way in which he acted; but as soon as Uncle Joe came rolling forward his whole manner changed.

"Who are you?" he growled angrily. "You're not Joe Marks."

"Well, if I ain't who am I?" asked Uncle Joe, rather taken aback.

The madman eyed him from head to foot.

"You're a tub of grease," he answered with great scorn. "Joe was as straight as a chalk-line."

"You know me den," suddenly cried another voice, and Colonel Svenson stepped out in front of the madman. "Ha, Jake, you known me, boy. I teach you all you know of de club."

The madman inspected him closely, and suddenly without a moment's warning drew both the clubs from his belt and rushed at the colonel.

Had the veteran been anything but what he was, it would have fared hard with him, but as it was he skipped out of the way like a flash, and Jake was seized by a dozen strong hands, and ironed in spite of his tremendous strength.

As soon as he felt the irons fairly secured he subsided into perfect quiet and the captain sent for the doctor to examine him at the station-house.

The result was that he was pronounced a hopeless and incurable maniac and sent back to Blackwell's Island where he still lives, as Uncle Joe says:

"Worser'n if he was dead, pore feller. It were a pity he warn't drowned, when we thought he was."

Colonel Svenson shook his head at this observation of the ex-policeman.

"No, no, Joe, you are wrong. It was good thing he was not drowned. He did good service when he was crazee. Man in his right mind could not do what he did. All alone, night after night, he sound his club and walk his beat where all de reserve of de precinct did not dare to go in a crowd. He excite deir superstition and dat is half de battle. He was de real 'Terror of de Tougs' and with-

out him we could not do half what we did. He keep your box for you, safe from Buck Jarvis, and he act his part well."

"I owe you everything," she said, a few months later, as she stood in the parlors of General Mix's house, dressed in deep mourning.

The general had treated her, on the whole, kindly and was getting to be very proud of his niece when he knew how well her mother had found time to educate her.

"I owe you everything, and you have a right to ask for anything of me."

She was speaking to a very handsome, well-dressed young man who might have been called a dude, but for the air of good sense and manliness in his face.

"Anything?" he asked softly.

"Yes, that is, anything in reason," she said in a low tone.

"Suppose I asked for this?"

He took her hand as he spoke, and she left it there and made no reply, but her forehead looked pink, while he could see no more of her face than that and the tip of her nose.

"Nina," he said, "I won't say that I love you. You know that. But I ask you, will you dare to be my wife when you know I'm not a rich man?"

She made no answer but a motion that he understood so well, that, next moment she had her head on his breast and was murmuring:

"I shall be of age next week and I've enough for both. You saved it for me and it belongs to you."

They are married and happy now.

THE END.

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